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THE



TIMES

FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

No. 65,235

Tax-free savings plan for retirement

By PETER RIDDELL

Major seeks to tackle looming problem of baby-boomers on the pension

RADICAL proposals to encourage people to save for their old age are being drawn up for the Prime Minister, who is worried about how the country will support the "baby boom" generation when it reaches retirement age in twenty years' time.

One idea being considered is for workers to be given tax relief on their savings if they lock them into an account that could be used only after they retire. Such an account would differ from today's pension plans because savers could pay in what they liked when they liked.

And, unlike Tessa's and Personal Equity Plans, tax relief would be given on the money invested and not just on the interest earned.

The scheme is one of several being considered by John Major's policy unit and, while plans are at a very early stage, the Prime Minister is keen to have firm proposals to include in the Conservative general election manifesto.

Mr Major, who introduced Tessa's (tax exempt special savings accounts) in his one Budget as

Chancellor, is personally involved in the search for ways to encourage thrift and is enthusiastic about the ideas emerging.

A discussion paper was presented to the Cabinet yesterday by Norman Blackwell, the head of the Downing Street policy unit, although no specific proposals have been circulated in Whitehall or examined by the Treasury.

Mr Major's strong personal interest stems from his concern about the extra costs that will arise

when people born in the late 1940s and 1950s retire early in the next century. He wants to persuade people to save now, not only to top up their pensions, but also to finance their health care.

Mr Major also hopes that introducing incentives for savers may help to win back the confidence of the middle classes. Ministers believe that worries about the cost of retirement have increased in line with fears about redundancy in white collar and service jobs, and

the Prime Minister is looking for ways of making people feel secure. Apart from acting to encourage savings, the policy unit and officials are examining the whole system of tax relief for personal savings, and changes may be introduced before any retirement-linked savings plan. At present, there are different tax structures for Peps, Tessa's and similar schemes; the suggestion is that each adult would be allocated an overall tax ratio to be distributed as he or she chooses.

Mr Major is keen to show that his party has not run out of steam after nearly 16 years in office, and he signposted some of the proposals to be unveiled in the coming year when he addressed the Conservative Central Council last Saturday.

Then, he said: "We Conservatives believe in thrift, with individuals encouraged to build up tax-free savings. That's why we introduced tax-free Tessa's and Peps. We want people to have the

security and independence savings provide. And we want to do more to encourage them."

In America, individual retirement accounts allow people to enjoy tax benefits if they save in schemes for retirement, though they are permitted to make withdrawals after a specified period to buy their first home, for the cost of university or training, and for long-term health insurance. An expansion of these accounts is part of the tax bill in the Republicans' "Contract with America" programme which was approved by the House of Representatives late on Wednesday.

Time runs out as Ingram is denied reprieve

By BEN MACINTYRE IN JACKSON, GEORGIA, DOMINIC KENNEDY AND RUTH GLEDHILL

NICHOLAS INGRAM prepared to die in Georgia's electric chair last night after a state clemency board refused to commute his sentence to life imprisonment, in spite of a personal appeal from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Georgia board does not pass on appeals, but upheld the death sentence against the British-born murderer after hearing from his victim's widow, who narrowly escaped death when Ingram broke into their home in 1983.

The board's decision left Ingram's lawyers with nine hours to file a flurry of desperate appeals before the execution, which was scheduled to take place at 7pm (midnight BST). A separate appeal for a stay of execution based on what is claimed to be new evidence was expected to work its way through four state and federal courts yesterday and would probably reach the US Supreme Court in Washington just before sentence was to be carried out.

Every other appeal, including two to the Supreme Court, has been turned down, and Ingram's legal team admitted the chances of a reprieve were growing dimmer by the hour.

His hopes had been raised on Wednesday when J. Wayne Garner, the chairman of the clemency board, insisted on meeting the condemned man face-to-face, but he was unimpressed by Ingram's personal appeal for mercy. The deci-

sion factor proved to be a telephone conversation on Wednesday night between the board and Mary Sawyer, the victim's widow, whom Mr Garner described as "quite a woman". Mr Garner ruled yesterday that death by electric chair was the only just punishment.

His decision prompted the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, to release the text of his letter and to issue a statement saying: "As spiritual leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion, and as a Christian, I plead with the people of the United States of America, as a great Christian country, to search their consciences about the use of the death penalty."

Dr Carey has used the influence of his throne to intercede on behalf of a condemned man only once before.

when his quiet diplomacy helped to save a prisoner in Uganda three years ago. He decided to speak up on this occasion only after John Major had refused to intervene.

Ann Ingram had made two emotional appeals to Mr Major to try to save her son, who was born in Cambridge and holds dual nationality. But Mr Garner said yesterday that intervention by the British Government would not have affected the decision.

After yesterday's ruling, Mrs Ingram and her husband travelled to the Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Centre at Jackson, and were able to stay with him until three hours before the execution was due to take place.

In his letter to the parole board on Tuesday, Dr Carey wrote:

"I am writing this message to you personally and in confidence as you face the awesome responsibility of deciding whether Nicholas Ingram's death sentence should be carried out. I hope you do not mind my offering some thoughts as you decide this man's fate."

First, may I ask you to consider that this young man has already spent some thirteen years suffering the mental and spiritual anguish of anticipating his execution? That constitutes an unusual and excruciating punishment, already demonstrating vividly



Last-minute appeal for mercy: Ingram and his lawyer Clive Stafford Smith appear in court at Jackson, Georgia

society's just repudiation of the awful crime of which he stands convicted. I know you will weigh this consideration with great care.

I also pray, as we approach the great commemoration of Easter, that you will remember that every person is made in the image of God and is loved by Him. Our Lord has showed how, out of the darkness and sin of the crucifixion, can come resurrection and new life. He is a God who,

despite all our wickedness, forgives those who truly repent and offers the chance of fresh life.

I cannot believe that it is God's will that this young man's life should be ended by state execution, after the unusual and severe retribution he has already endured. I hope that you will feel able to show mercy and commute the death penalty to a sentence which offers eventual hope of fresh life and rehabilitation.

I do not envy you your task. The responsibility must weigh heavily upon you and you will be very much in my thoughts and prayers as you make your decision. I know you will consider carefully this heartfelt appeal for clemency.

Archbishop of Canterbury
Primate of All England and
Metropolitan.

Condemned cell, page 13
Martin Fletcher, page 18
Leading article, page 19

Body found near scene of murder

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE body of a middle-aged woman has been found near the scene of the apparently motiveless killing two months ago of a farmer's wife.

Murder squad detectives sealed off a country lane yesterday near Middleton-on-the-Wolds, Humberside, after the woman's body was discovered on the grass verge. It was apparently wrapped in a carpet or bag.

The scene is about 20 miles from Burton Fleming where Margaret Wilson, 66, was murdered by a man who cut her throat as she walked along a lane. A man in a car stopped near her and slashed her throat, using an unusual shoe-repairer's knife. He drove off before farm workers who had seen the attack could come to her aid. Nobody has been detained in connection with that killing.

At noon yesterday a motorist reported that he had found a woman's body in a lane linking Middleton with the hamlet of Lund. Last night a post-mortem examination to determine the cause of the woman's death was being carried out by a Home Office pathologist.

Britain ends nuclear tests

Britain ended more than 40 years of nuclear testing when Sir Michael Western, Ambassador to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament, said the Government agreed to scrap the right to carry out underground explosions to check weapons systems' safety and reliability. Page 10

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Doctors' threat of action puts pressure on Bottomley

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY, the embattled Health Secretary, faced a new headache last night after leaders of Britain's 26,000 family doctors threatened industrial action over night-visit payments.

The Government is threatened with the prospect of guerrilla warfare in surgeries lasting all the way to the next election unless it gives ground. As John Major rallied the Cabinet behind Mrs Bottomley in her battle over London hospitals, a meeting in the capital between her deputy, Gerald Malone, and leaders of the British Medical Association ended in deadlock.

At the same time the controversy over London health care intensified with the disclosure that a cancer patient had to spend nine hours lying on a trolley in a side room before she died. Northwick Park Hospital is investigating circumstances surrounding the death of Maggie Curdin, 48.

Last night the BMA hinted at disruptive action designed to hit the Treasury and clog up hospitals without harming patients or putting doctors at risk of breaching their contracts of employment. A BMA spokes-

man said that after the failure of the latest round of negotiations, doctors' leaders were planning to ballot their members on April 20. "A package of sanctions has been drawn up that will not harm patients or put GPs at risk of breach of contract." This was a coded description of the BMA's plans to hit the Government with a higher drugs bill and to increase the hospital workload by sending more patients to see consultants.

Mr Malone said after the meeting with BMA leaders that he was prepared to be flexible about his formula for settling the night visits dispute. He also indicated that he was ready to improve on the £15 million of new money on the table. The BMA said it wanted £100 million extra.

The new threat was the last thing Mrs Bottomley needed after the dispute that has stalled the Government's fightback launched by Mr Major last weekend. Yesterday she received a warning from David Mellor, a former Cabinet minister, that she faced a "crisis of confidence at every level".

Although there is pressure

on Mr Major to move Mrs Bottomley, nothing can happen until his summer reshuffle, and there was a concerted effort yesterday to shore up his beleaguered minister.

Downing Street officials said that he backed the policies being pursued by Mrs Bottomley and Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, who has been found to be in breach of the law over the introduction of a new criminal injuries compensation scheme.

Last night Mrs Bottomley said that she had received strong support from her colleagues. "I am not going to blame my predecessors, the Treasury, the Prime Minister or my junior ministers," she said.

She acknowledged that there was a "gulf" between the public's understandable affection for their local hospital and the advice of expert committees. But she believed that people would come to appreciate the wisdom of her decisions and her reluctance to take "the short-term option or duck difficult decisions."

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Letters, page 19

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BA and Virgin settle but battle on

By ROSS TIEMAN AND MARTIN WALLER

VIRGIN Atlantic Airways' British "dirty tricks" case against British Airways ended last night when the two airlines agreed an out of court settlement. But they continued their public row over its terms and implications.

BA said that Richard Branson's airline had agreed to withdraw its £29 million compensation claim for damage inflicted by alleged poaching of passengers by BA.

According to BA, Virgin is to pay its £750,000 legal costs, in return for a £265,000 payment plus a £100,000 contribution to its own legal costs.

But Will Whitehorn, Virgin's spokesman, said: "They have paid us £265,000." The £750,000 Virgin is claimed to owe BA he said had not been agreed. And the £29 million Virgin claim from BA for passenger poaching had not been settled, but transferred to the US, where Virgin is conducting its \$1 billion claim against BA, alleging that its business was damaged by preferential treatment at Heathrow.

Virgin's £5 bid, page 23

WILBUR SMITH

THE SEVENTH SCROLL

OUT NOW

THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

Murderer driven by ambition hoped death of fiancée's parents would bring him £150,000

Businessman gets life for shotgun killings

By RICHARD DUCZ

A BUSINESSMAN who shot dead his fiancée's parents in the hope of claiming their £150,000 estate was jailed for life yesterday.

Jonathan Jones, 34, killed Harry Tooze, 64, and his wife Megan, 67, with shotgun blasts to the head after taking tea with them at their farmhouse in South Wales.

Mr Justice Roulger told him that the double murder was "an evil outside the contemplation of all of us". Jones's fiancée, Cheryl Tooze, refuses to accept that he is guilty and her decision to stand by him has left her isolated from the rest of her family.

Jones, of Orpington, south-east London, was convicted of the murders on circumstantial evidence by a 10-2 jury majority after a 58-day trial at Newport Crown Court.

The prosecution told the court how Jones was driven by greed. He wanted to start a market-research firm but had only £99 in his bank account. Cheryl Tooze, an only daughter, stood to inherit about £150,000 if her parents died. Jones knew that she was the sole beneficiary of their estate.

In July 1993 he made his way from Orpington to the Toozes' six-acre home at Llanharry, Mid Glamorgan, where he shot the couple and left their bodies in a cowshed. He later appeared on tele-



Murdered after tea: Harry and Megan Tooze

vision with Miss Tooze, 34, as she made an emotional appeal for help in tracking down her parents' killer.

After the murders he went back to the one-bedroom flat he shared with Miss Tooze and pretended that he had spent the day looking for rented offices for his planned market-research firm.

Christopher Pitchford, QC, for the prosecution, said: "This is a chilling story. The killing bears all the hallmarks of an execution. Jones was a man preoccupied with money matters and ambition."

Before Jones was jailed, Miss Tooze told the court: "If I thought Jonathan was guilty I would say so. I wouldn't protect him over this. I don't know what the future holds

for us. I really don't know if we can rebuild our relationship, though I always think we will be the best of friends."

"I was very close to my parents and used to worry about them all the time. I have constantly had nightmares since this happened. If I wanted money for anything all I would have to do is ask my parents."

But the judge told Jones: "It was the planned and pitiless execution of a harmless couple who should have had nothing from you except your affection and respect."

Jones shook his head as he was led away to the cells. Miss Tooze, who has lived with him for the past eight years, was not in court to see him sentenced to two life terms.

She has been treated for post-traumatic stress and is taking tranquillisers.

Although Jones carefully prepared his alibi, no estate agents in Orpington remembered seeing him on the day of the murders. The court was told that he and Miss Tooze were often behind with their rent and that he could not afford to finance his business plans. He was eventually arrested and charged more than two months after his victims' funeral.

Jones had first shared a cup of tea with his unsuspecting victims, leaving his left thumbprint on a cup and saucer. But detectives found no evidence from his clothes or car to link him directly to the killings. The murder weapon was never found. Jones gave evidence in his defence, insisting he was innocent and claiming he was "like a son" to Harry Tooze. "We spent a lot of time together and I think we had a close relationship," he said.

After the verdicts Elfed Radcliffe, 64, Megan Tooze's brother, said that he had disowned Cheryl. "I don't want to see her again. She has decided not to talk to me and other members of the family and to go and live with Jonathan's parents in Caerphilly."

Jones's parents, Graham and Pauline, cried as he was jailed.



Jones and Cheryl Tooze at the victims' funeral, more than two months before his arrest. He later told the court that he had been "like a son" to Harry Tooze

Schoolboy raiders jailed for hold-up

By TIM JONES

TWO public schoolboys who terrorised staff during a £2,000 armed raid on an off-licence were ordered to be detained yesterday.

Jonathan Starck, 16, and Hugh Christensen, 15, were pupils at Merchant Taylor's school in Hertfordshire when they held up Victoria Wine in Watford last year. Starck, of Watford, was sentenced to three years' detention and Christensen, of Rickmansworth, to two and a half years. Both admitted robbery. Luton Crown Court heard that Starck, brandishing an imitation revolver, burst into the shop with his face covered by a scarf and sunglasses. He ordered the manager, Rohan Mascarenhas, 25, to turn off the lights and move to the safe. Stephen Harral, the assistant, hit a silent alarm but it did not work. Told there was a 15-minute delay before the safe opened, Starck told the manager to empty the tills. He added: "Don't do anything stupid or I will kill you."

Christensen was then let in through the back door. When they left, Starck warned the men not to follow and Christensen added: "Or we will come back and kill you."

As Starck drove away in his father's car he crashed into a wall. A resident, Alan Burgess, who went to help, saw the gun and forced it from Starck's hand. They were arrested when police arrived.

Bowbelle chief 'had lost job through drink'

By EDWARD GORMAN

THE master of the dredger *Bowbelle* had a record of dereliction of duty due to drinking while in charge of a ship. It was suggested at the inquest into the *Marchioness* disaster yesterday.

The allegation, made for the first time in public, came from a lawyer representing the families of the victims during a 70-minute appearance in the witness box by Douglas Henderson, who was in command of the dredger at the time of the collision on the Thames in August 1989 in which 51 people died.

Mr Henderson, 36, who has twice been acquitted of charges in connection with the disaster, repeatedly refused to answer questions put to him by Terry Mumford, counsel for the families of the victims. Dr John Burton, the west London coroner, warned Mr Henderson that he might incriminate himself.

Mr Mumford asked whether Mr Henderson had been employed on two ships during the mid-1980s by a Danish skipper who had sacked him for repeatedly drinking while on duty. Dr Burton said Mr Henderson should not answer because the question was outside the remit of the inquest. "He may have convictions for drink-driving, but it isn't relevant to this inquest."

Dr Burton stepped in again when Mr Mumford suggested to Mr Henderson that twice in June 1989, two months before the disaster, the *Bowbelle* had either run aground or been in collision when he was in charge. Earl-

er Dr Burton read to the jury the notes of a police interview of Mr Henderson conducted the day after the disaster. In the course of the interview, Mr Henderson admitted he had returned to his ship on the night of the collision after drinking one pint of beer in four pubs and possibly two in a fifth.

"He told the police that after visiting the pubs he had returned to the *Bowbelle* at 6pm and then slept between 8pm and 11.45pm, when he got up ready to sail at midnight. Dr Burton is likely to end his summing-up today."

Mr Henderson still works for South Coast Shipping of Southampton, which owned the *Bowbelle*. Last year he was suspended for six weeks on full pay while the company investigated allegations that he was drunk while on board his new ship. No disciplinary action was taken against him.



Henderson: silent

Fear of attack led Stagg to carry axe

By MARIANNE CURPHY

COLIN STAGG, the man acquitted last year of murdering Rachel Nickell on Wimbledon Common, had been threatened so often since his trial that he regularly carried an axe for self-defence, his solicitor told a court yesterday.

He was carrying it while out walking with his fiancée on Wimbledon Common in January this year, when he got into a fight with a 34-year-old gas fitter which resulted in both suffering cuts and bruises. The court was told that Mr Stagg was kicked and head-butted and his fiancée, Diane Beddoes, fell into a pond.

Mr Stagg, 31, and Miss Beddoes, 26, of Roehampton, southwest London, each pleaded guilty at Wimbledon Magistrates' Court yesterday to carrying an offensive weapon. Mr Stagg also admitted threatening behaviour.

Ian Ryan, for the couple, said that since his release from the Old Bailey last September, Mr Stagg had received threatening letters and phone calls, had been burgled and "felt that every one was against him". Miss Beddoes carried a coach.

Mr Ryan said: "His life in effect was complete and utter misery. He was living in effect in a pressure cooker." Mr Stagg had faced constant harassment since being acquitted of murder.

The hearing was adjourned until May 4 and the couple were granted bail.

Doctor found hacked to death in seafront flat

By KATE ALDERSON AND ANDREW PIERCE

THE body of a retired police surgeon has been found hacked to death in his beachfront apartment. Alan King, 70, of Lytham, near Blackpool, is thought to have been killed 48 hours before he was found on Wednesday night.

The murder is thought to be the first in Lytham for 40 years. Dr King was bludgeoned to death by a heavy, geonoid to death and two of his fingers were sliced off when he held his arms up in self-defence.

Detectives were yesterday interviewing a 20-year-old man from Blackburn in connection with the murder.

The alarm was raised when the doctor, a renowned bridge player, failed to turn up for a match at his local club. Police went to the flat and found the body, which had severe head injuries.

Dr King, who had changed

his name from Abdur Rahman Qureshi, retired five years ago after running his own surgery in Blackburn. He worked as a surgeon for Lancashire Police for more than ten years. He was accused and acquitted in 1982 of defrauding the National Health Service.

Carol Humphries, secretary of his bridge club, said: "We are all deeply shocked. This is a kind and gentle man. He didn't turn up for his usual game and one of the members contacted the police because we feared he was ill."

"He hadn't been in good health so we were worried about him. We kept ringing but there was never any answer."

She said that Dr King was an excellent bridge player and had competed against the best in the country. He had earlier

fulfilled one of his ambitions when he played against Omar Sharif.

Neighbours of Dr King, who include Michael Jack, the Agriculture Minister, were appalled by the brutality of the killing. Alison Jack, the minister's wife, said last night: "We are all shocked. This is a peaceful area."

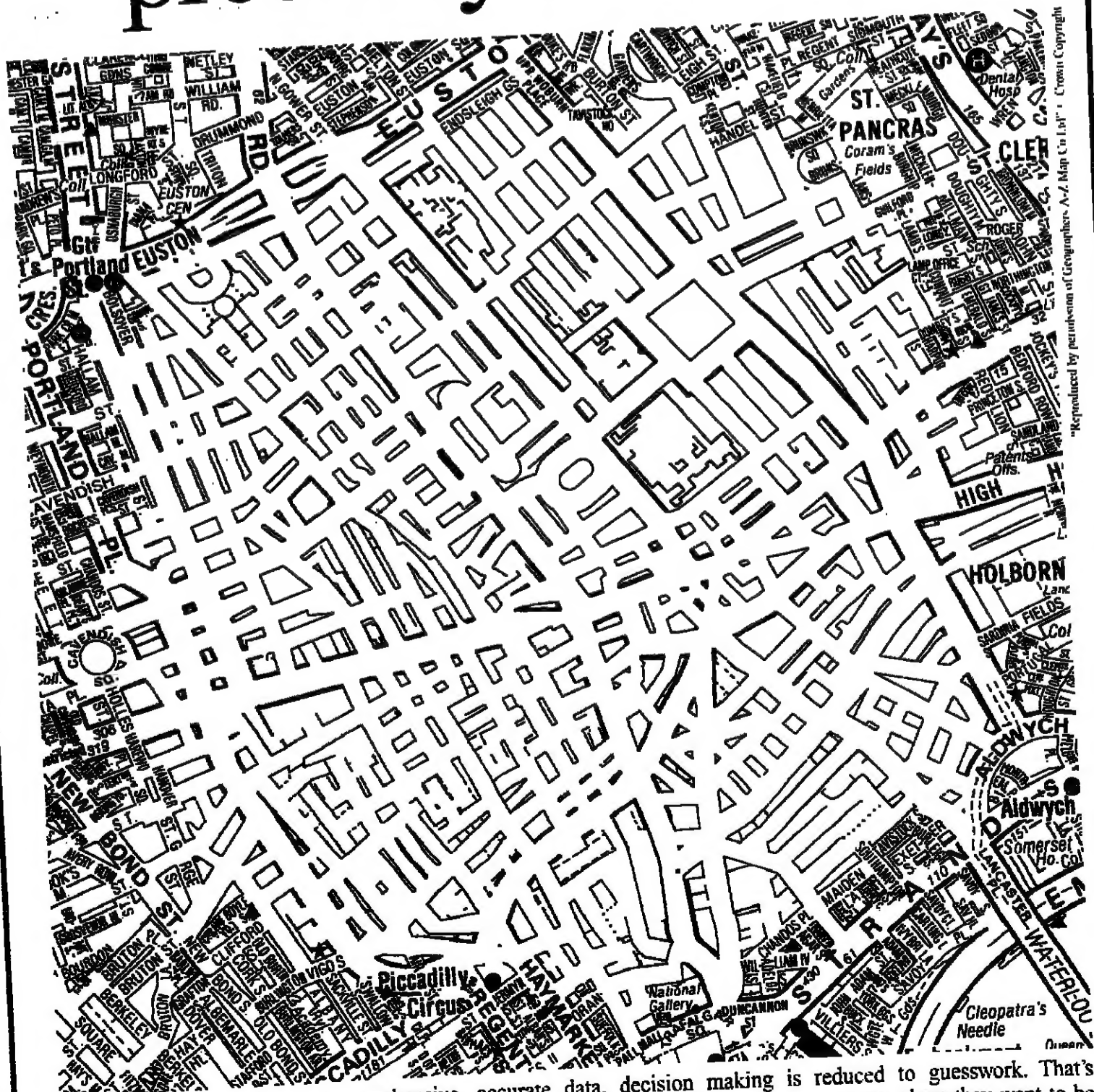
He had lived alone in the flat for five years. It was protected by an entry-phone.

A neighbour in the flats said: "He was a perfect gentleman who came here to retire. He wanted a quiet life away from it all but close enough to his beloved bridge. We are all deeply shocked."

Mary Porter, Dr King's cleaner, was horrified. "I can't believe this. I was supposed to call at his flat on Tuesday but could not make it. He was a nice easy-going man."

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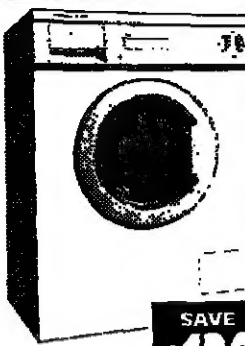
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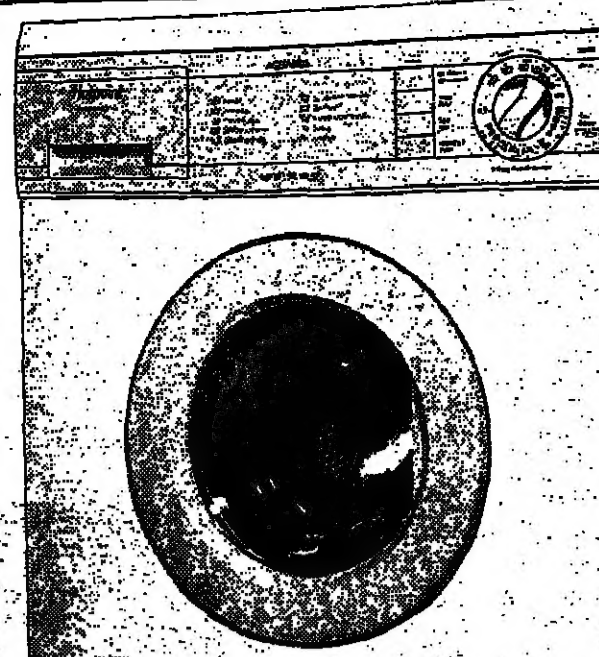
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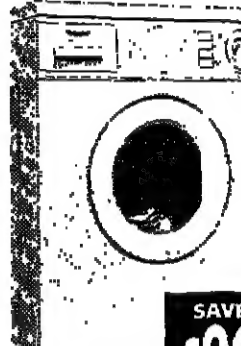
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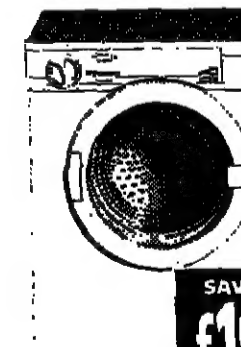
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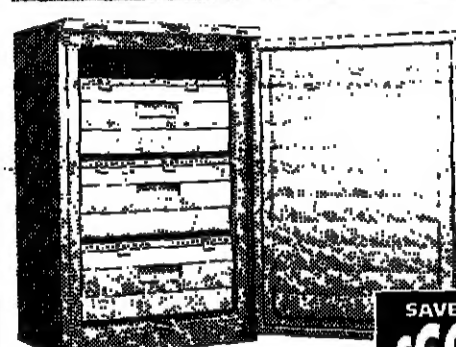
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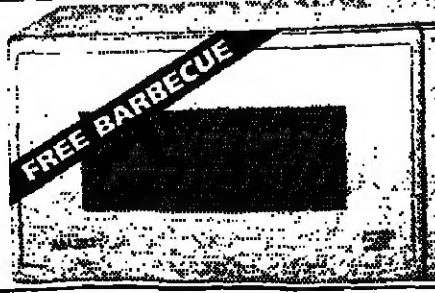
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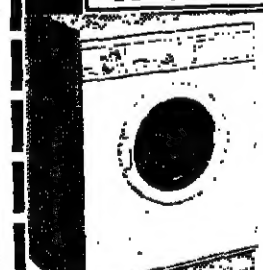
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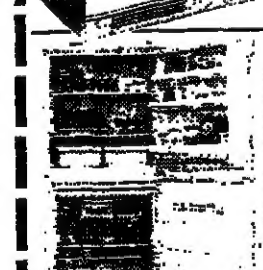
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THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

Research backs traditional teaching

Grammar lessons 'help children to be better readers'

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

CHILDREN need to be taught basic grammar if they are to avoid falling behind in reading and spelling, research pioneered at Oxford University has found. The findings, which will increase support for traditional teaching methods, will be presented at an international conference today.

A team of researchers led by Professor Peter Bryant, the Watts Professor of Psychology, has established a link between an awareness of grammar and syntax, and children's progress in learning to read. Tests of children in London and Oxford are said to have produced astonishing results.

The findings, which will be reported at the Reading 2000 conference in Glasgow, come amid fresh concern over standards of literacy in primary schools. The City Technology Colleges Trust has commissioned an inquiry in all its 160 affiliated schools after discovering that one in five entrants reads poorly.

The Oxford research focused on children's ability to recognise past tenses and develop more advanced techniques, such as the use of the apostrophe. An awareness of a word's grammatical context proved to be crucial in spelling and initial decoding.

Professor Bryant said yesterday: "We are really excited about this research because it is saying something quite new about the later stages of reading and spelling. The project is not about teaching methods, but we do think that the relationship between grammar and spelling is under-emphasised in schools."

The teaching of grammar has declined over the past 30 years, as the emphasis in English lessons has switched

to more informal methods of learning. Ministers have tried to encourage a revival through the national curriculum and new marking criteria in public examinations.

Standards of literacy have been the subject of growing concern in recent years. National surveys have suggested that one in seven adults has reading problems.

The CTC Trust launched its initiative this week after council members were shocked by the latest reports on standards among 11-year-olds entering its affiliated schools. About 20 per cent of pupils were between two and three years behind their expected reading age, and in one London school the proportion reached 40 per cent.

Sir Cyril Taylor, the trust's chairman, said: "When we have that level of problem we have to focus on it. One school even considered suspending the curriculum for a semester to concentrate on literacy and numeracy, but we were advised that this might be illegal."

Some CTCs are to experiment with computer-based teaching of reading, which has produced great improvements among children in trials. The package has been found to motivate slow learners particularly, moving them on automatically to higher levels when they master basic techniques.

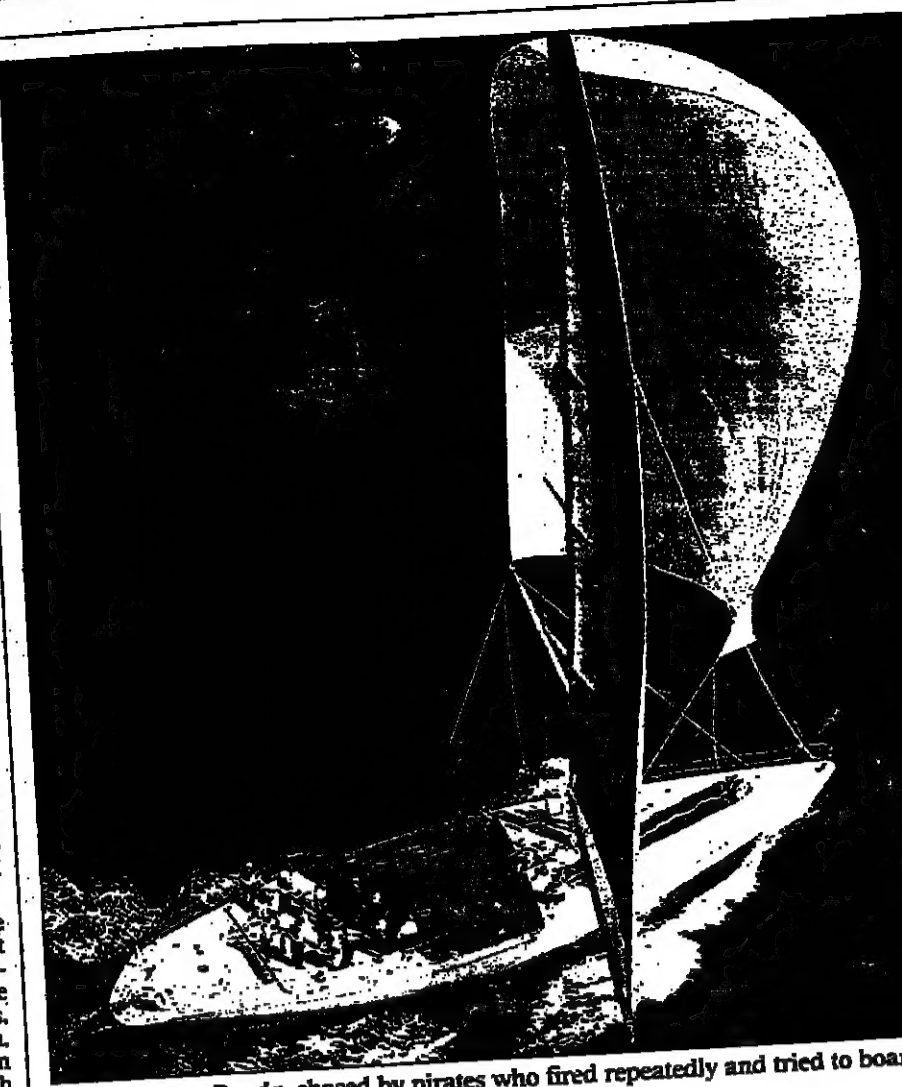
Others have enlisted the help of pupils' grandparents and other relatives to run programmes in remedial reading. The trust is to examine the various approaches when the schools report back later in the year.

Sir Cyril said: "In the past, this problem has been swept under the carpet, but it is fundamental to raising ach-

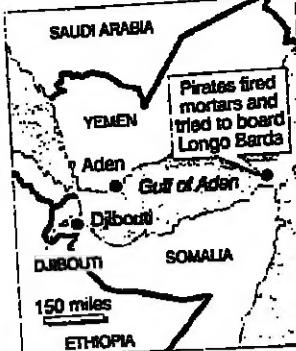
ievement in secondary schools. It is not a general problem: we could identify particular primary schools where reading standards are particularly bad."

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, told a conference in London that he was "not surprised by the trust's findings. He said that inspectors' reports were continuing to raise fundamental questions about methods of teaching in many primary schools."

Schools in Wales would be set targets for improvement under plans announced yesterday by John Redwood, the Welsh Secretary. The plans, published for consultation, would set GCSE targets in mathematics, science, English and Welsh, which the schools would publish annually.



The Longo Barda, chased by pirates who fired repeatedly and tried to board



Yacht skipper Neil Batt, ambushed off Somalia

Yacht crew saved from pirate attack

BY LUCY BERRINGTON

THE skipper of a British ocean racing yacht last night described how he and his crew of six escaped "by the skin of our teeth" after being ambushed by pirates off the coast of Africa.

Neil Batt said the pirates, firing repeatedly, came within 6ft of the Longo Barda off Somalia in the Gulf of Aden. The two Britons, one New Zealander and four Australians were rescued when a Canadian warship raced to their assistance after picking up a radioed call for help.

Speaking to The Times by radio, Australian-born Mr

Batt, from Lympington, Hampshire, said the pirates began their attack with a mortar shot at 6am on Wednesday. Firing guns repeatedly, they tracked the yacht for more than an hour. Mr Batt, 36, and his crew were preparing to negotiate for their lives: "There were about 10 to 15 Africans armed with hand guns trying to board. We hoped we could buy our way out of it." The yacht, returning from the Sydney to Hobart race, was saved by the arrival of a container vessel and the Canadian frigate.

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Cantona will coach 700 young players

BY STEWART TENDLER

ERIC CANTONA, the Manchester United footballer, will coach more than 700 youngsters in a special programme which he has devised to continue with the community service order made by a judge last week.

Liz Calderbank, assistant chief probation officer for Greater Manchester, said: "This is no soft option. We insisted that Mr Cantona devise the programme and it is very demanding in terms of the numbers involved and the length of the coaching sessions." The children — aged between nine and 11 — will have one two-hour session in groups of 12 with the former French league player.

They will be drawn from clubs and schools in the Salford area of Manchester which are already involved with the probation service.

Cantona was given the 120-hour order after a successful appeal against a two-week prison sentence for attacking a spectator he said was taunting him during a match at Crystal Palace. The court recommended that he should be given work which made use of his skills and helped young people.

Cantona will use his club's training ground, The Cliff, in Salford, for four hours of coaching each weekday afternoon starting on April 18. The secure facilities were chosen to avoid media intrusion and sessions will be supervised by a probation officer. The programme is likely to last for some months because of Cantona's commitments.

Hospital survival rates vary for hip surgery

BY JEREMY LAURANCE

PATIENTS admitted for surgery after fracturing a hip are seven times more likely to die in some hospitals than others, researchers have found.

A University of Cambridge study of 580 patients treated at eight hospitals in East Anglia showed that while almost one in five of the patients died within three months, survival rates differed between hospitals from 75 per cent to 95 per cent.

The findings demonstrate the importance of clinical audit studies comparing different styles of care, which are increasingly practised in the NHS. Over 55,000 people, most of them elderly women, break a hip each year in England, and the death rate is high, at 12 to 20 per cent within four months.

In the East Anglian study, reported in tomorrow's *British Medical Journal*, the age, sex, type of fracture, and previous health of patients were not factors. Nor was the survival rate affected by whether surgery was performed by consultants or junior doctors.

There was a link with the prescribing of anti-coagulant drugs. Giving these drugs to prevent blood clots after surgery is recognised good practice but was not routine in all of the hospitals. There were 12 deaths from pulmonary embolism — blood clot on the lung — among patients not given the drugs, compared with none among those who were.

One hospital had a seven-fold lower risk of dying. The researchers, led by Dr Chris Todd of the university's Health Services Research Group, say that no single aspect of this hospital's practice explains the better survival rate, which seems to result from the total care.

The hospital, which, like the others, is unidentified, had a special team for treating hip fractures; with one surgeon doing most of the operations and patients routinely given drugs to prevent blood clots. Patients were got back on their feet early after surgery and careful plans made for their discharge.

THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

Lord Harris of High Cross, champion of the pipe, enters the smoke of battle on the Brighton line

Free-market guru seeks to pacify fuming commuters

BY ALICE THOMSON

LORD HARRIS of High Cross has become the unlikely referee in the battle of the Brighton commuters.

The affable Thatcheryan has appointed himself to arbitrate between smokers who have been holding illegal "fug-ins" in the buffet car and non-smokers who keep reporting them to the Transport Police. Two years ago British Rail, backed by the Government, banned smoking on commuter routes in the South-East, including the Brighton to Victoria line. They produced an opinion survey showing that most commuters opposed smoking on trains.

Lord Harris, the man behind the free-market Institute of Economic Affairs and chairman of Forest, the tobacco industry-funded action group for smokers' rights, smokes a pipe and has never commuted by train. But, having spent two months studying the Brighton commuters' rebellion, he smells scandal. Next week he launches the 22-page Forest report, *No Smoking Without Fire*. At meetings in the Shakespeare Tavern, Waterloo, "I acted as Robin Day, arbitrating between a lot of suits and a few roughnecks mingling with twin sets and pearls," he explains. He also talked to Ash, the anti-smoking group.

"When I heard that BR were putting plain-clothes police onto the smokers I offered to mediate. It seemed ridiculous that smokers were being followed home and threatened with a £500 fine just for lighting up. I thought I would



Lord Harris: arbitrator

be the ideal referee. Is a pipe smoker any less impartial than a non-smoker, ex-smoker or anti-smoker?"

Lord Harris, a spritely 70-year-old who has smoked for 50 years and carries three spare pipes, has been into hospital only once, and is less interested in smokers' lungs than their rights.

"For 150 years smokers and non-smokers commuted amicably together. BR cannot suddenly deny smokers, 29 per cent of the adult population, their basic rights, especially when these people have paid over £3,000 a year for the privilege of commuting. They couldn't do it to the disabled or women so why pick on other minority groups?"

"My friend Lord Aldington used to come up every day smoking his pipe and reading *The Times*. Now he has to drive and can't enjoy either."

The report picks BR's opinion survey to pieces. When Lord Harris finally forced BR

to divulge the findings, he discovered that only 49 per cent of non-smokers favoured a decrease in smoking accommodation. BR and the Government have refused to consult with anyone on the issue. "The ministers are very chummy to me but they don't want anything that rocks their privatisation boat," Lord Harris said.

"This is one of the most outrageous cases against the individual that I have seen. No one is suggesting that smokers should mingle but at least one of the twelve carriages should be for them."

Lord Harris wants to meet the BR chairman, John Welsby, to persuade him politely to change his mind. "So, he doesn't let a rebellion in the regions turn into farcicals throughout Britain. Already other lines are beginning to rumble."



Smoke signal: a passenger on the 18.06 to Brighton defies the ban. Smokers say at least one of the 12 carriages should be set aside for them

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YOU CAN WITH A NISSAN

Passion ignited in resistance to tobacco police

Smokers on the Victoria to Brighton commuter trains are warring support from non-smokers for their defiance of Network SouthCentral's ban, Robin Young reports

THE message from the smoke-filled corridors of the 18.06 from London Victoria to Brighton is clear: it is a smoker's cough. It is that no one, smoker or non-smoker, is happy about Network SouthCentral's ban on smoking aboard its trains.

The buffet cars on the 18.06 and the 19.00 trains have become the smokers' last redoubt on the network's otherwise smoke-free lines. In defiance of the ban, imposed in 1993, a hard-core of 50 or 60 unrepentant smokers fill the buffet cars on these two trains each evening and light up.

They complain of harassment by railway officials and plain-clothes police, but have the support of several non-smoking friends who choose to travel in the buffet cars, claiming that although the atmosphere may be smoky it is much more convivial than in other parts of the train. When the authorities descended on a group of suspected smokers recently, the whole carriage began singing *Deutschland über alles*. Steena Nicoll, 33, from Hove, a customer-care consultant working in Westminster, was one of three smokers cautioned by a party of nine uniformed and plain-clothes police and railway officials. "It was very intimidating and frightening," she said. "I think that after people have been up 12 hours and working all day in what are often non-smoking offices they should have the right to relax and unwind on their way home. I do not smoke on the way into work in the morning, because there is no safety in numbers then, and that is when they try to pick us off."

Nigel Thomas, 26, a project manager from Brighton who was cautioned at the same time, said: "While the revenue control officers are harassing us, 20 or 30 people are hopping off the train without paying their fares. It is a fantastic waste of resources. When you have to call in police to threaten fare-paying travellers with court injunctions and massive fines I think you can say customer relations have pretty well broken down completely."

Ian Thompson, 43, a civil

servant and 40-a-day man, said: "We are a significant minority, and we deserve some consideration. If between a fifth and a quarter of the population smoke, on a 12-carriage train we might expect to have two or three carriages where smoking is permitted. Just one carriage would be excellent, but they will not even allow us that."

Pamela Woodhall of Brighton, a sales assistant approaching retirement, said: "It's incredible to me that hard-working, fare-paying people are having their collars felt for a perfectly normal activity, especially when the solution is so simple. If I had a customer who was spending thousands of pounds a year, I would show them a bit more respect."

Gary Ceaplan, 25, a City worker from Brighton, said he had left work half an hour late to "take a train" from Victoria rather than London Bridge, so that he could join other smokers. "I only smoke about five a day, but I reckon to have three of those on the train going home," he said. Of non-smokers on the train, David Dickinson, 52, a university lecturer from Imperial College London, said: "I have complained in the past about smokers commandeering the buffet car on this train, but now I only come in here when I am travelling with a colleague. I do think some provision should be made for the smokers, so that non-smokers can have access to a smoke-free buffet car."

Max Hamford, 25, a secretary from East Grinstead, said: "I have never wanted to smoke myself, but I always come in the buffet car on this train. It is a lot more fun, like a pub on wheels."

Ian Rhodes, 35, a health service worker standing near an open window, said: "Passive smoking should be tackled, but it is not realistic to expect fellow travellers to enforce the rules. If the railway want to have a complete ban they should be prepared to enforce it, or they should give it up. The present situation is unsatisfactory for all concerned."

The buffet car attendant said: "Luckily I am a smoker myself, so it really does not worry me."



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Lawyers find police 'soft touch' for cash as complaints rise

BY STEWART TYNLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

CIVIL actions against the police are increasing because lawyers are cashing in on legal aid fees and forces have become a "soft touch" for quick settlements, a barrister told a national police conference yesterday.

Some of the cases could be stopped if forces were prepared to admit mistakes and send a letter of apology.

John Beggs, who specialises in defending police, said suing forces had become a "potent source of income" for High Street criminal law firms. Government changes in the amounts paid in legal aid for criminal cases had reduced income but legal aid work for civil cases was still well paid.

Barristers specialising in criminal work were also beginning to realise the potential income from civil litigation. Every time they got someone acquitted in difficult or dramatic circumstances they might now advise solicitors to bring a claim even if the

chances of success were not good.

Scotland Yard paid out £1.76 million last year for such actions and is currently facing a claim from Colin Stagg for punitive damages over the Rachel Nickell case. Many forces are not insured for most claims, and policies carry an excess clause which means they have to find the first £10,000 of any settlement.

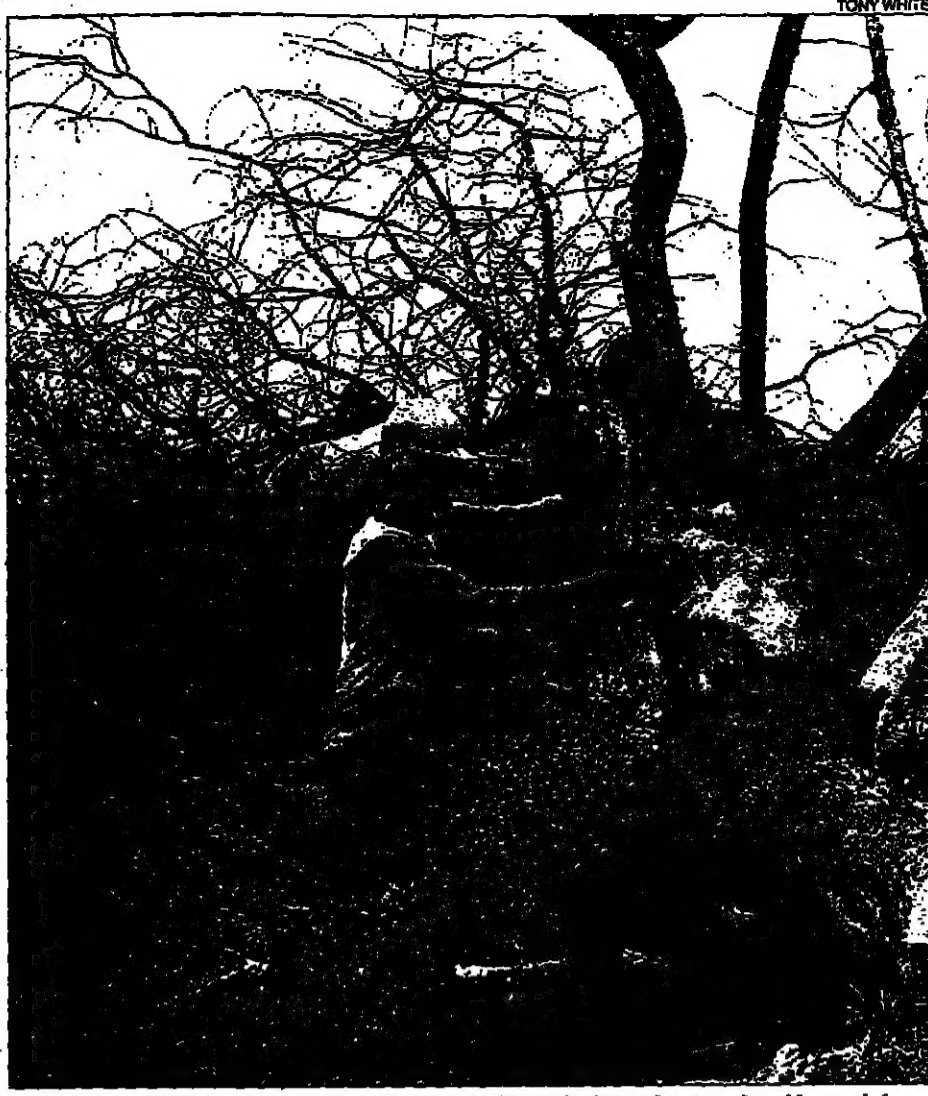
Mr Beggs said that the reasons for the rise included publicity, an increasing awareness by people of their rights and a lack of confidence in police complaint procedures. Mr Beggs, addressing lawyers and police in London at a conference called to seek ways of reducing claims, said a number of forces were also now recognised as easy to take on. A defendant arrested for a few hours after a Friday night brawl could earn himself £1,500 in a quick settlement.

He said police handling

protests such as the picketing of veal exports were facing a new threat for court actions. The plaintiffs were articulate, politically motivated and saw the police as the frontline of the opposition. There were examples where officers were tied up in court for weeks, obliging forces to reduce their operations. Protest groups also picked on forces as deliberate strategy. One force had paid damages in 80 out of 83 cases brought by hunt saboteurs over two years.

Mr Beggs said that after ten years of working with police he had yet to see a letter of apology sent out. Forces seemed to believe that such a move amounted to admitting liability, but this was not always the case.

Another speaker, Dr Barrie Irving, director of the Police Foundation, said that Britain was following the United States in seeing an increase in litigation against all the professions, including the police.



Felling of the 418 trees began earlier this week and is due to be completed by tonight

Canadians angry at felling of memorial trees

BY LIN JENKINS

AN AVENUE of 418 sycamore trees, planted as a memorial to Canadian servicemen who died in two world wars, is expected to have been felled by tonight by workmen from the Highways Agency.

The destruction of the living memorial has incensed a group of Canadian veterans, which is said to be considering bypassing Britain during the VE Day celebrations in protest. Objectors have complained of the "crass insensitivity" of the felling so soon before VE Day.

The trees, which form a canopy over the southbound A3 at Bramshott, Hampshire, have been deemed diseased, dangerous to drivers and in the way of road widening. Protesters have held candle-lit vigils since the felling began earlier this week and the local Tory MP, Michael Mates, needed a police escort after mistakenly assuring campaigners that he had won a stay of execution for the trees.

They were planted at the

end of the First World War along a one-mile stretch where the A3 bisected the Canadians' military camp. Additional trees were planted after the Second World War.

Gordon McGhee, 71, who married his wife Linda after coming to Bramshott during the last war, described the felling as slaughter. "It is not the trees that are dangerous but the drivers," he said. "People seem to have forgotten that this is a memorial."

Stim Bradford, 80, a Canadian living in Minehead, has written to the Queen and John Major in protest. "Over the years I have taken many veterans and widows to see the magnificent trees," he said. "They bring back powerful memories of the struggles we faced during the war and the sadness to those who did not return to their loved ones."

He said the timing of the felling meant that the Canadian Veterans' Association was considering bypassing Britain and heading straight for Holland for VE Day.

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Death of Everett gives credence to dangerous myth

Dr Thomas Stuttford

KENNY EVERETT's death has been mourned by his many listeners. His broadcasting, unashamedly homosexual, was loved as much by a heterosexual Chelsea patron as by his male fans in Brighton.

Yesterday newspapers carried photographs of Everett enjoying a night out with Freddie Mercury and two other gay friends, all four are now dead, and all four died from HIV. Unfortunately, this picture reinforced the perception that AIDS is a homosexual plague and that others are safe. Britain is lucky, or its sexually active population has been careful, for as yet AIDS — or HIV positivity which is medically speaking far more important — is still a homosexual or drug abusers' problem.

In the Third World AIDS is a predominantly heterosexual disease, and so it will become here even though the changeover from homosexual to heterosexual epidemic has taken much longer than

was predicted by the experts 14 years ago. Recently the public health laboratory service inquired into the source of infection in 3314 cases of heterosexual British people who had AIDS. Their investigations underlined the message to the travelling public to be vigilant, or preferably totally abstinent, when travelling abroad. Of the 3314 cases, which are now dead, and all four died from HIV. Unfortunately, this picture reinforced the perception that AIDS is a homosexual plague and that others are safe. Britain is lucky, or its sexually active population has been careful, for as yet AIDS — or HIV positivity which is medically speaking far more important — is still a homosexual or drug abusers' problem.

Of the remaining cases 508 had had sex with high-risk partners — drug abusers or bisexual men. In the other cases, inquiries continue, but the assumption is that they were infected by heterosexual low-risk partners. The heterosexual epidemic of AIDS overseas is related to a greater acceptance of prostitution and the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases.

Since the First World War in Britain there has been the most comprehensive system of genital-venereal medical clinics in the world, with the sole purpose of treating venereal disease.

The same service does not exist elsewhere and genital infections are rife. It is the problems associated with these infections, and also suffered by women who have been damaged in childbirth, which result in many of them having a chronic discharge. It is often forgotten that HIV flourishes as readily, if not more readily, in pus as it does in blood.



Everett: mourned by fans

Trawl the stores for bargain fish

BY JOHN RUSSELL

IN THE final days of Lent, white fish is available at good prices, with cod and haddock fillets fetching about £2.95 per lb. Packets of four hot crosses buns are reduced at Asda from 71p to 49p and Asda is offering a 700ml Marmite Easter chick ice cream log at 99p.

Bargains are available this week on household goods and toiletries. Sainsbury's has reductions on its own brands, with one litre of moisture cream bath down from £1.29 to 99p and 12 soft bathroom tissue rolls for £2.69.

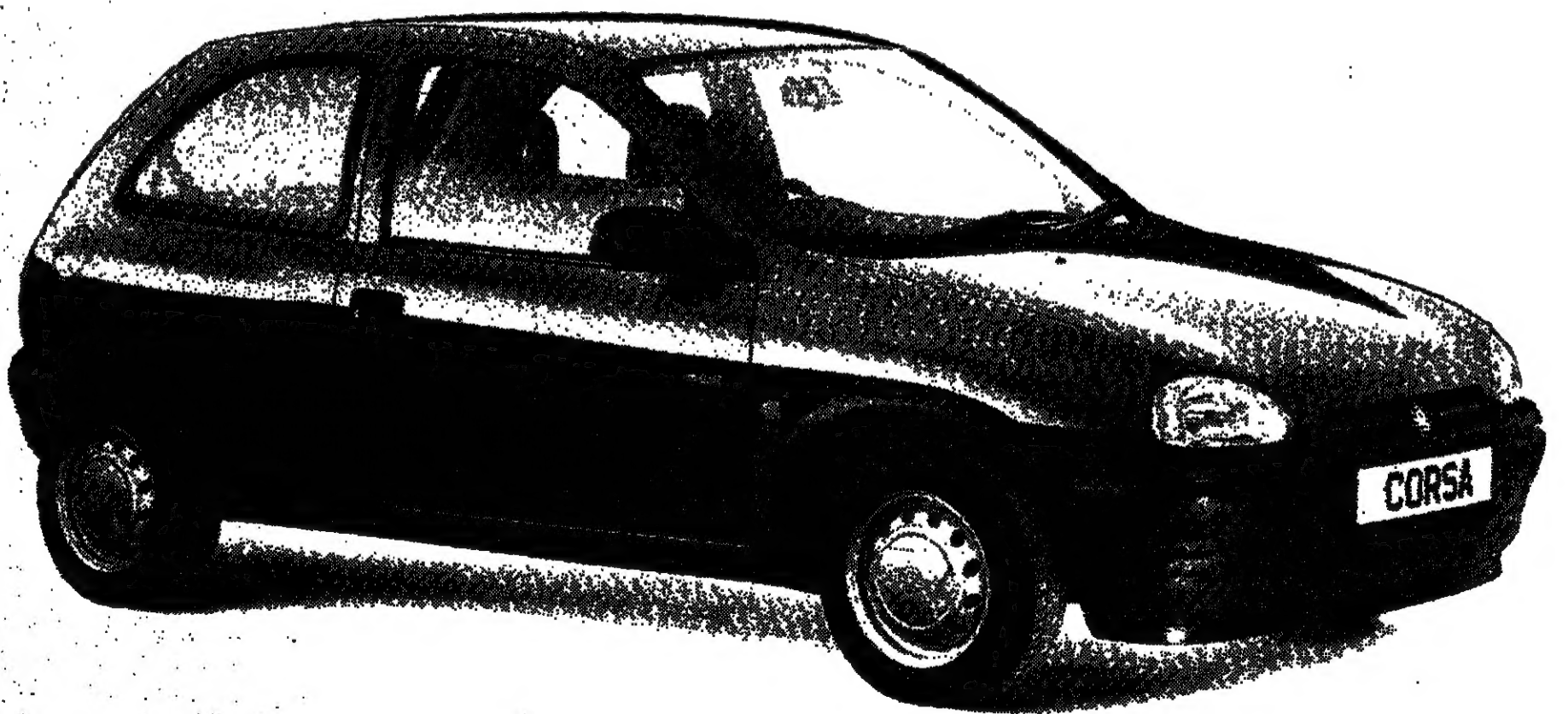
Other advertised offers: Asda: Olive Gold Spread (500g) 69p; Colgate Total Pump (100ml) £1.65; Borden's traditional French brie (loose from deli) £1.99 per lb; Co-ops: Del Monte pineapple sorbet (500ml) £1.49; Stewells Vin de Pays du Tarn, 3l for £10.99; fresh whole extra-large

chicken (min weight), 5lb 12oz at £4.49; Harrods: cioppini with olives or mushrooms, £6.80 per lb; cherry mozzarella with chilli and oregano, £6.80 per lb; Iceland: North Atlantic prawns, £2.99 for 400g; petit pois 99p for 2lb; Marks & Spencer: pot chrysanthemums, £2.99 each; seedless red grapes £1.49 per lb.

Sainsbury: golden delicious apples, 38p per lb; Sainsbury: Tennants Pilsner (24), £9.79; J.S. Boboli pepperoni pizza, £1.85 each; Sainsbury/Gateway: fresh double cream (568ml), 95p; Tesco: wholeheart mussels (1.5kg), £1.99; six mini Melton Mowbray pork pies at £1.09; Waitrose: Supreme instant coffee (200g jar), £2.65.

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'No more dimples in Nevada desert'

Britain ends 40 years of nuclear test explosions

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN officially ended more than 40 years of nuclear testing yesterday by making a significant concession at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament.

Sir Michael Weston, Britain's Ambassador to the conference in Geneva, said the Government agreed to scrap the right to carry out underground explosions to check the safety and reliability of weapon systems. Although the Government is committed to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, during negotiations which began in January last year Britain and France demanded the right to continue conducting safety tests "in exceptional circumstances".

The demand was inserted into the rolling draft text of the treaty and was viewed by some members of the disarmament conference as a stumbling block in the crucial negotiations. It is hoped that a treaty may be ready for signing at the end of this year or early next year.

Yesterday's announcement appeared to take members of the conference by surprise and was widely welcomed. France has also agreed to give up safety tests.

The decision follows the announcement on Tuesday that the 100 remaining WE177 nuclear bombs carried by the RAF are to be scrapped by 1998, nine years earlier than planned, reducing Britain's



Sir Michael Weston

nuclear firepower by 59 per cent since the 1970s.

Britain's last test, in the Nevada desert, was on November 26 1991. Another was planned for the autumn of 1992 but had to be shelved when the United States announced a moratorium on testing in October of that year. The moratorium has been renewed each year since then.

Since Britain relies on the American test facility, the Government had to put all test plans on hold. Once committed to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Foreign Office officials admitted it made no sense to insist on the right to carry out safety and reliability tests.

Yesterday's formal announcement by Sir Michael indicates that the Ministry of Defence is now satisfied that all future safety tests can be

carried out in the laboratory. The Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston in Berkshire can test the reliability of nuclear weapons using a method known as hydro-nuclear explosion, which involves tiny amounts of fissile material.

A Foreign Office official said: "We have now formally given up nuclear testing. There'll be no more dimples in the Nevada desert."

Patricia Lewis, director of the independent Verification Technology Information Centre, said the Geneva announcement was highly significant and timed to have maximum impact on the negotiations to extend the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, starting on April 17.

Britain began nuclear testing on October 3 1952 on the Monte Bello Islands off Australia in an operation codenamed Hurricane. Tests at the Maralinga site in South Australia began in 1953 and were codenamed Totem, Buffalo and Antler. H-bomb tests were also carried out on the Monte Bello Islands.

The nuclear tests in Nevada started in 1962 and the last one was conducted as part of a series to evaluate the British-designed warhead for the Trident ballistic missile.

In 40 years of testing, Britain has carried out a total of 44 explosions, of which 23 were underground at the Nevada site. The earlier tests were carried out in the atmosphere in Australia.



The Queen meeting Commodore Ian Gibb, master of the Oriana, on the bridge

Oriana naming masks decline of naval heritage

By JOE JOSEPH

"I NAME this ship *Oriana*," declared the Queen in Southampton yesterday as she smashed champagne on to the hull of P&O's new German-built flagship. "May God bless her and all who sail in her."

The traditional invocation camouflaged the fact that the tradition itself is all but dead: the last time the Queen named a British passenger liner was in 1967, when the QE2 came slithering out of Clydebank — before the days when a British ship was launched in Germany and merely brought "home" for the champagne ceremony.

"Though built in Germany," the Queen added, acknowledging that the occasion perhaps required a footnote, "she is very much a British ship — British-owned, British registered and flying the red ensign — a reminder that for all the changes in the modern world we have never lost touch with our maritime heritage."

Nothing, not even the demise of Britain's shipyards, was allowed to mar the birthday of the 69,000 gross ton *Oriana*, the fastest cruise liner built for a quarter of a century, capable of topping 25 knots. A rusting Russian cargo liner, the *Blaschanka*,

moored behind the £200 million *Oriana*, was moved so as not to sully photographs. A flock of small leisure craft came and bobbed by the ship's handsome prow until a harbour police launch sent them scurrying away.

The days when crowds of flag-waving well-wishers gathered to such an occasion have also died. The 2,500 at yesterday's ceremony were those who were great enough or good enough to secure an invitation.

Lord Sterling of Plaistow, P&O's chairman, explained that the name *Oriana* was used by Elizabeth I's courtiers and madrigal writers to symbolise her virtue and popularity. The name's resurrection on the hull of P&O's flagship, he said, created a bridge between the two Elizabethan eras. A previous *Oriana* liner was built at Barrow-in-Furness and launched by Princess Alexandra in 1959 for the former Orient line.

After yesterday's launch the royal party attended a private lunch on board and toured the ship. On Sunday the *Oriana* leaves on her maiden cruise to Morocco, Gibraltar and Portugal. All berths were booked nine months ago.

Britain
condemns
Canada

Animal 'measles' virus killed horses and trainer

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE killer of 14 horses and their trainer has been identified as a distant relation of the measles virus. The outbreak of the disease in Australia last year created fears of a human epidemic.

The Australian team who tracked down the cause say the agent responsible is a morbillivirus and is the first known to cause human infections since measles emerged in the 10th century. The morbillivirus group includes the viruses responsible for a number of animal diseases, including canine distemper, seal plague virus and the cattle disease rinderpest.

The newly discovered virus kills by causing cells lining the

blood vessels to clump, creating holes in the vessel walls so that they leak. Fluid pours into the lungs, causing severe breathing difficulties. Victims also suffer from a high fever.

The research, carried out by a team led by Dr Keith Murray of the Animal Health Laboratory in Geelong, near Melbourne, and reported in *Science*, shows that the virus, named EMV (equine morbillivirus), is extremely virulent: it killed 70 per cent of the horses exposed to it and one of the two humans who caught it, the 49-year-old trainer Vic Rail. A stablehand was also infected but survived.

The team was able to isolate the EM virus from Mr Rail's

kidneys, proving that he had died of the same disease as the horses. But it is not known where the virus came from or whether it will appear again. Dr Murray believes that it normally infects most Australian animals without causing disease, showing its potentially fatal characteristics only when transferring to horses and humans.

The next step is to catalogue every animal species in the Brisbane suburb, Cannon Hill, where the first horse succumbed, and examine blood samples to see if they contain the virus. The researchers hope they will be able to track down the animal host within six months.

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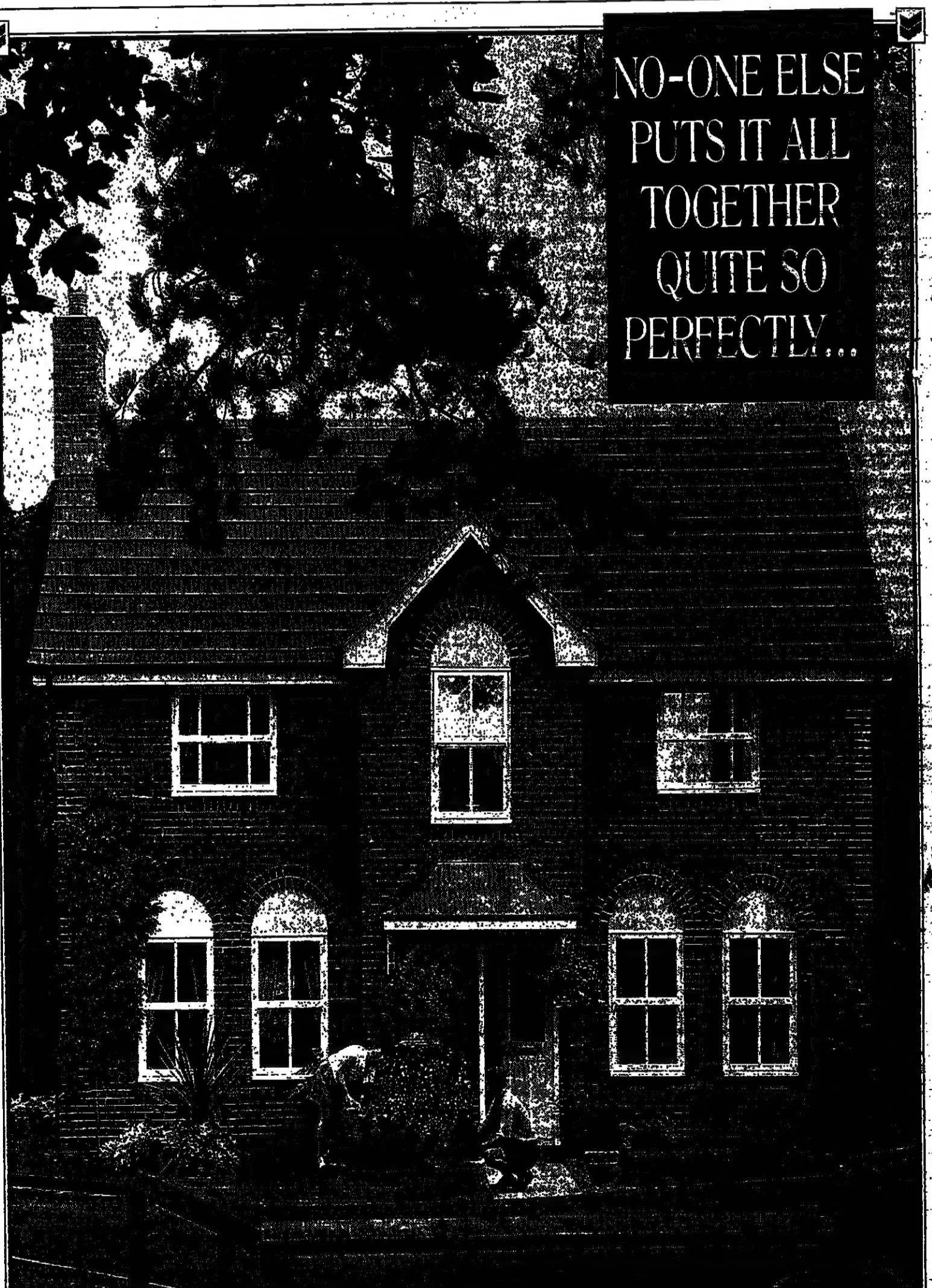
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Britain vetoes EU condemnation of Canada over fish

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN LUXEMBOURG AND GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

BRITAIN yesterday broke ranks with the majority of European Union member states in the fishing dispute with Canada, and vetoed a resolution strongly condemning a Canadian attack on two Spanish vessels in international waters on Wednesday night.

Michael Jack, the Fisheries Minister, said he could not support the resolution, which required unanimity, because it would have been counter-productive to the success of the negotiations between the two sides. He also said that accounts of the attacks on the Spanish vessels were based on "uncertain reports".

This was contradicted by the European Commission, which said yesterday that independent inspectors of the North-West Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (Nanfa) had established that a Canadian patrol boat had cut the nets of one Spanish trawler.

Spanish radio quoted captains as saying that Canadian ships had tried to cut the nets of two trawlers and to board one. Jacques Roy, Canada's Ambassador to the EU, re-

plied that there had been no contact with Spanish vessels, and no attempt to cut nets or board any ship.

But Mr Roy acknowledged that the situation off the Grand Banks in the northwest Atlantic remained tense and refused to confirm or deny whether Canadian ships had approached Spanish trawlers on Wednesday night.

"We have been conducting surveillance of the Spanish vessels quite closely and we have tried to show our disapproval," he said.

One incident appears to have brought two ships close together but never into contact. The captain of the Galician trawler *Ana Maria Gandon* told a radio station that a Canadian vessel tried to cut her nets four times but failed, and then came within two metres of the stern while trying to board. The European Commission called in Mr Roy and issued a statement in which it accused Canada of a flagrant violation of international law.

The transatlantic dispute over Greenland halibut began with the seizure of a Spanish

trawler by the Canadians outside Canada's territorial waters. The EU has never accepted the seizure as legal.

At the Luxembourg meeting, most EU fisheries ministers rallied around Spain. In language reminiscent of the vituperative attacks on Canada last month, they debated a draft declaration, strongly opposed by Britain and Sweden, condemning Canada's action.

France, which holds the EU presidency, said it "condemned the latest actions, unilaterally carried out against vessels carrying the flag of a member state in violation of the rules of international law".

It added that EU ministers "deplored" Canada's decision to embark upon unilateral action at a delicate stage in the discussions between the EU and Canada.

France also renewed calls for Canada to repeal domestic legislation that allows Canadian patrol boats to operate outside Canada's 200-mile zone.

The British delegation appeared uncomfortable at the prospect of provoking another



Fishermen demonstrate against what they consider Canadian piracy outside Canada's Embassy in Madrid yesterday

domestic backlash by supporting a resolution critical of Canada.

Canada responded to European Commission charges of "harassment" on the high seas by calling in ambassadors from the EU, Britain, Spain and Germany to protest over what Brian Tobin, Canada's Fisheries Minister, called "this absolutely false report by the

Spanish fishing captain". Mr Tobin said that the European ambassadors were told to check with the Canadian Government any allegations that Canada had harassed the Spanish, and called the EU actions "improper and foolish".

He added: "It is irresponsible for the EU to have acted in the way it has." For his part, Mr Roy has also

signalled that Canada is ready to make only one further concession in the peace talks and appears to have turned down appeals from Brussels for more flexibility. He hinted that Canada might give ground over its unilateral declaration to control fishing beyond the 200-mile limit but on nothing else.

The accord that is now

being drafted gives the EU and Canada equal portions of the 27,000 tonnes of Greenland halibut to be caught in the disputed zone in a year. Both sides have also agreed that fishing will be monitored both by satellite and by posting inspectors on trawlers. The outstanding discord concerns the size of the Canadian catch.

Protesters bombard Madrid embassy

By Our Foreign Staff

SEVERAL thousand fishermen, incensed by alleged Canadian harassment of Spanish trawlers, pelted the Spanish Embassy in Madrid with dead fish and eggs yesterday.

Police with plastic shields formed a cordon in front of the embassy and officials there hurriedly hauled in the red and white Canadian flag. Riot police and organisers were stained with egg yolk, and fish littered the ground. No injuries or arrests were reported. Enrique Davila, captain of the *Esai*, the trawler seized by Canadian authorities on March 9, demanded that the European Union take "a courageous position". He said during the demonstration that the Spanish Government was doing a poor job of defending fishermen's rights. "We are up against a government of delinquents... the Canadians are the pirates of the oceans in the 21st century. We want Canada to abandon its absurd and backward recourse to aggression. They're trying to carry out a medieval conquest of the fishing ground by seizing our boats."

The crowd later marched on the EU office in Madrid for a further demonstration.

EUROPEAN SUMMARY

Ancient gospels are stolen

Stockholm: Two men used teargas to fend off guards and visitors as they stole two pages from a sixth-century manuscript of the gospels, known as the Silver Bible, on exhibition in Uppsala University library near here.

The manuscript, looted from Prague by Swedish troops in 1648, was a translation into the Gothic language and was written with gold and silver ink. The manuscript is one of the few extant written remnants of the language. Other pages of the manuscript are stored elsewhere in the library. (AP)

TV ruling aids superhighway

Brussels: The European Court of Justice, in a ruling that could affect the future of the information superhighway, told television stations that they had no right to prevent an independent company from publishing their programme listings.

Bomb 'not cause of air crash'

Bucharest: There was no evidence that a bomb or terrorists caused last Friday's crash of a Romanian Airbus, which killed 60 people, Elio Di Rupo, the Belgian Communications Minister, said after meeting investigators here yesterday. A final verdict on the cause of the crash, in which 32 Belgians died, will not be known until after analysis of the digital data on the A330 aircraft's flight systems. (Reuters)

'Shamed' Turk kills his sisters

Bonn: A Turkish man killed himself after killing his two sisters out of shame for their Western lifestyles. Police said the women, aged 20 and 21, died instantly when they visited their parents. Family members told police that the man "felt his honour as the older brother had been deeply tainted". (Reuters)

Chirac harvests the fruits of odyssey in rural heartland

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BREST, BRITANNY

HIGH on the bluff over the bay of Saint Brieuc on the north Breton coast, a band of excited little boys pressed their noses to a plate glass window as they peered in on the man they were calling "President Chirac".

The term was fitting because inside the classroom of the marine nature centre, Jacques Chirac, the Gaullist presidential favourite, was listening like a visiting ruler to the rival positions of farmers, fishermen and ecologists. Fertiliser running off the fields is killing France's richest scallop grounds, the fishermen complained. Brussels and red tape are killing the land, the farmers grumbled.

The candidate took long nozes before delivering an energetic homily on the twin scourges of pollution and technocracy which he says are plaguing the country. France's

the grassroots, running the risk of political oblivion. A tall man with expansive gestures and an engaging manner, he has listened tirelessly, as he did in Brittany this week, at hundreds of round tables, microphone in one hand, a pen in the other and deep concern on his face. He has wolfed down the local cuisine, knocked back the local beer and done his best to convince every citizen that their troubles are his. "Chirac has made so many promises that it will take a CD-Rom to store them all," a Balladur man grumbled this week as the veteran of two prime ministerial terms sailed on in his new incarnation as saviour of the people.

The latest polls show M Chirac's lead sagging further or holding steady fewer than half a dozen points ahead of M Balladur and Lionel Jospin, the Socialist candidate. All project him as the easy winner in the run-off, due on May 7. Entering the final stretch of his race, M Chirac has left far behind his old image as an ambitious hothead in favour of an aura of statesmanship. The serene "Grand Jacques" was in evidence as he progressed across the rolling countryside of Brittany in a Peugeot van with none of the rush and noisy escorts of M Balladur's jaunts. His team is planning for the run-off, hoping that M Jospin, not M Balladur, will be the opponent, thus sparing the Gaullists the ultimate family feud.

They are also quietly sketching a government, almost certain to be headed by Alain Juppé, the present Foreign Minister and interim Gaullist chief. Gone will be Charles Pasqua and the other "traitors" who threw in their lot with M Balladur. With a military victory in the wind, many a turncoat is seeking pardon, to the wry amusement of the candidate and his team. "The ones who were trying to get him to withdraw only a few weeks ago are now turning up to meet the aircraft," one lieutenant said.

Publicly, however, M Chirac is all humility as he struggles to avoid the gaffes to which he is prone and the complacency that sank M Balladur's early campaign. "Nothing is decided until election night," he said when he reached Brest, the port city on the western tip of Finistère. "The people will decide on Europe and everything else."

While Edouard Balladur, his protégé, won the limelight in the Prime Minister's job and was encouraged by the polls to nurture his own ambitions, M Chirac withdrew to campaign quietly at

"environmental house on fire", he said, promising to tackle the blaze. If he becomes President, he will also create a great new ministry of the sea, he promised.

The hour in the sunlit classroom, which followed a meeting with managers at an inland factory for the handicapped, offered a snapshot of the formula that seems likely to carry M Chirac to the victory in the presidential race that he has been seeking for the past 20 years. Two weeks from the first round, the Mayor of Paris is harvesting the fruit of a two-year odyssey in which he has visited almost all of the 95 départements, "working the soil" of France.

While Edouard Balladur, his protégé, won the limelight in the Prime Minister's job and was encouraged by the polls to nurture his own ambitions, M Chirac withdrew to campaign quietly at

Nato team for Croatia

Brussels: Nato ambassadors yesterday authorised the deployment in Croatia of 80 military personnel from the alliance to prepare for a United Nations withdrawal from Bosnia if necessary, diplomatic and military sources said.

The personnel are communications experts, mainly from Britain and the United States, and will be under UN command, the sources said, emphasising that the decision to send them to Croatia does

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Gummer orders fish study after US warming alert

FROM NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT
IN BERLIN

SALMON and trout are likely to disappear from some of the world's finest rivers if global temperatures continue to rise as scientists predict.

The findings, released at the Berlin climate summit yesterday, come from American scientists and economists who have been studying the impact of global warming on freshwater fish.

It shows a steady loss of species from American rivers and streams sweeping up from Texas and California into the Midwest and New England states as temperatures rise in the 21st century in line with computer forecasts. Adam Markham, of the World Wide Fund for Nature, said: "These results are equally significant for British freshwater fish."

Last night, John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, promised to step up studies on rivers in Britain. Famous salmon and trout rivers in Britain include the Ull and the Great Ouse in Hampshire, whose fish stocks have been declining recently for reasons still unclear to scientists. "The health of fish is a key



indicator for the quality and stability of water. I have no doubt the work done in America will lead me to want to accelerate our research," Mr Gummer said.

He said the findings showed how changes of as little as a tenth of one degree centigrade can interfere with the balance of nature, altering fish spawning and bird migrations.

The damage to freshwater fish, estimated at billions of dollars in the United States alone from lost fishing permits and sales, has been assessed by researchers with the American Environ-

mental Protection Agency. An official with the agency said yesterday that the research was launched to assess the impact of riverside power stations, which emit hot water, on angling and freshwater stocks. "We have gone back to these and have done some field work to identify what will happen to fish across the United States. In the lower part of the United States many species of fish will no longer exist. In the north, cold water fish are replaced by warm water ones." Warm water species include catfish and bass.

Delegates from 100 nations are meeting in Berlin to try to agree tough new targets for cutting greenhouse gases beyond the year 2000. Mr Gummer said a glimmer of light had emerged during the negotiations. A European Union document, aimed at balancing the concerns of the United States with those of the developing world, appeared to be easing the deadlock.

Mr Gummer issued a warning that for the European Union to maintain its leadership on climate change, member states' plans to cut emissions needed to be scrutinised. At the moment Greece, whose emissions are expected to rise by at least a third by 2000, has no credible plan.

Spain's attempt to stabilise emissions by 2000 was now off course because it had mothballed two nuclear power stations. Germany was heading for bigger reductions than anticipated, which is helping to offset the excess pollution from the southern European nations, officials said.

A partial breakthrough was achieved yesterday with delegates agreeing to back studies into "joint implementation" — a strategy which would allow rich polluting nations to offset their emissions by paying for energy-efficient schemes and forestry projects in the developing world.

Kamal Nath, India's Environment Minister, reaffirmed the position of the developing nations. He said that the rich northern countries had for too long been "free riding" on the backs of the Third World. "This is the difference between the luxury emissions of the United States and the survival emissions of India," Mr Nath said.

He said that in the United States the pollution issues centred on whether a family chose between one or two cars. In India, it was a question of getting a square meal.



A Moscow worker repairs a Soviet-era sculpture for the May 9 celebrations of the Allies' victory in the Second World War. President Jiang Zemin of China is the latest world leader to agree to attend

Letters, page 19

Turkish army will pull out of Iraq 'in weeks'

By EVE-ANN PRENTICE
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

TURKEY will pull its troops out of northern Iraq "within weeks", Hikmet Cetin, the country's Deputy Prime Minister said yesterday. However, he hinted that troops may stay on the border between Turkey and Iraq even after Ankara's military campaign against Kurdish guerrillas ends.

"We will see how we can protect our border," Mr Cetin said after talks with Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary in London. He denied that Turkey was planning to create a buffer zone in the region.

Mr Cetin was in London as part of a Turkish attempt to fend off international criticism of the military action. His visit came as the European Parliament condemned the campaign by 35,000 Turkish troops, and repeated that it would withhold approval of Customs Union between the European Union and Turkey.

In what were said to be blunt talks between the two men, Mr Hurd called for an early withdrawal and said the Turkish campaign was damaging Ankara's relationship with other European states.

Mr Cetin emphasised that his country wanted to pull back, but would not do so until it had cleared Kurdish guerrilla training bases from the region. "Iraq cannot exercise legal authority in northern Iraq and we have the right to do this," he said. "Whatever the cost is, we have to have peace."

Britain is anxious to know if Turkey has an exit strategy, and how and when it might be implemented.

Mr Cetin also struggled off criticism that western journalists are not allowed free access to Kurdish separatist areas of southeast Turkey. "There are some problems in the area, I am not denying it," he said. "There is a misunderstanding in western countries." Normally, he added, there was "no problem".

Erdal Inönü, the Turkish Foreign Minister, was in Washington, meanwhile, meeting Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State. Linking a target date for a withdrawal to a visit by Tansu Ciller, the Turkish Prime Minister, to America next week, a senior US official said: "Our feeling is the visit would be more productive and fruitful if ... there was a commitment to a date."

Up to 6,000 Turkish troops were reported yesterday to have pulled out of two of their main bases in northwest Iraq, including a palace built for President Saddam Hussein.

Leading article, page 19

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Latvians to move refugees from train

Riga: Maris Gailis, the Latvian Prime Minister, said yesterday that Riga would bow to international demands and move about 100 Middle Eastern refugees, including about 40 children, from a crowded train to a holding camp after efforts to deport them to Russia failed.

"It seems we have to make them a camp and deal with these people the way other countries do," he said. "We had hoped the Russians would take them." Mr Gailis added that a last-ditch diplomatic attempt to convince Moscow to accept the group had failed.

The Government had decided to transfer the refugees to an open prison in Olaine, 15 miles south of Riga. Mr Gailis said he had been troubled by international criticism of Riga's decision to leave the two railway carriages containing the group for over a week on a siding in poor conditions.

Although Latvia was not party to international refugee conventions, he said the country planned to adopt a system of humanitarian asylum used in Austria to deal with refugees from the war in former Yugoslavia. The Interior Ministry said a special area would be set aside within the prison for the refugees. (Reuters)

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Martin Fletcher, page 18
Leading article, page 19

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Gingrich wraps up legislative blitz ahead of schedule

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

WITH a thumping victory on the tenth and final Bill in Newt Gingrich's *Contract with America*, House Republicans have completed their radical programme for the first 100 days of this new Congress a week ahead of schedule.

By 246 votes to 188 on Wednesday night, the House approved what the Speaker called the *Contract's* "crown jewel" — a Bill offering \$189 billion (\$118 billion) worth of tax breaks to families and businesses over the next five years.

"With this Bill, the tax-raising legacy of President Clinton and his party are over," proclaimed Bill Archer, the Republican author of the legislation. Earlier in the day, Mr Gingrich had celebrated the *Contract's* completion in typically flamboyant style. He had a troupe of elephants from a visiting Ringling Brothers circus parade back and forth in front of the Capitol, the elephant being the Republican party's symbol.

House Republicans today held an \$80,000 rally on the Capitol steps where they first signed the *Contract*, and tonight Mr Gingrich makes a presidential-style broadcast to the nation to boast of his accomplishments. In one sense his bragging is prema-

ture. The more cautious, moderate Senate will not approve the *Contract* in anything like its present form. Even those measures it does pass face the threat of a presidential veto.

The Senate has already rejected the *Contract's* centrepiece, a constitutional amendment mandating a balanced federal budget. It is expected to approve only modest tax cuts, and will substantially revise Mr Gingrich's radical welfare reforms. So far it has approved just three of the *Contract's* other Bills — measures making Congress subject to private-sector employment laws, preventing it imposing costly mandates on states without proper funding, and enabling the President to cut wasteful items without vetoing entire spending Bills.

But Mr Gingrich's accomplishments are none the less substantial. After years of paralysis, the House has completed a legislative blitz of a sort not seen since the 1933 Congress rushed through President Roosevelt's emergency legislation to alleviate the Great Depression.

Despite having a majority of just 26, the Republicans have passed all but one of the *Contract's* ten bills, the exception being a constitutional amendment limiting congressional terms. Most important,

Mr Gingrich has utterly transformed the political debate. For the first time in 60 years Washington has slowed the relentless growth of federal spending and returned power to the states.

The "Republican revolution" has left Mr Clinton looking almost peripheral. He and his fellow Democrats have proposed few new initiatives of their own, resorting instead to dire warnings of how the Republicans plan to dismantle government programmes that Americans value in their efforts to help the rich.

Mr Clinton, who won election in 1992 by promising "change", has thus become the defender of the status quo. The President who campaigned as "the man from Hope" now preaches fear, portraying himself as the last bulwark against Mr Gingrich and a conservatism running amok.

However, recent polls make sobering reading for the Republicans. Barely two-fifths of respondents know what the *Contract* is. Mr Gingrich is unpopular and distrusted. A Washington Post survey showed 59 per cent believed the Republicans would go too far in their cuts, while only 34 per cent faulted the Democrats for seeking to preserve costly programmes.

Former UN leader gathers support

Peru's elder statesman taps protest in race for presidency

FROM GABRIELLA GAMBINI IN CUZCO, PERU

CROWDS packed the colonial square in Cuzco to show eleventh-hour support for Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the former United Nations Secretary-General seeking to become Peru's next President.

"We are behind him because he is a grandfatherly figure whom we can trust, and who can give Peru a better international image," said Flores Idalgo, a teacher, waving at Señor Pérez de Cuéllar, 74, as he made his closing campaign speech here before Sunday's election.

The elderly diplomat is gathering votes in most urban centres across southern Peru, such as Cuzco, a colonial town cradled in a valley surrounded by Andean peaks. Built on the sumptuous remains of Inca temples and palaces, it is also Peru's biggest tourist attraction.

"This is where the Incas harboured their treasures centuries ago. I want to begin building a new Peru from here," said Señor Pérez de Cuéllar.

He has emerged as President Fujimori's biggest rival. Until last month, it looked as if Señor Fujimori would slip easily back into power because of his Government's success at curbing inflation and stemming the terror campaign by the Maoist Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) rebels, who have claimed 27,000 lives in a decade.

But just days before the elections, opinion polls showed Señor Pérez de Cuéllar could prevent Señor Fujimori from winning an outright majority in the first round, and therefore force a run-off in June.

The hub of Señor Pérez de Cuéllar's support is among professionals in the wealthier regions and in agricultural areas not badly affected by terrorism. He is gathering the protest votes from people opposed to Señor Fujimori's authoritarian style of leadership.

The President's estranged



Señor Pérez de Cuéllar greets a crowd of supporters at an election rally in Cuzco

wife, Susana Higuchi, who publicly accused her husband of being a "corrupt dictator" after he dabbled with the constitution to rule by decree and passed a law barring her from politics, has promised her vote to the former diplomat.

"We need a more democratic government which will heighten our country's credibility," said Michel Ascueta, campaign manager for Señor Pérez de Cuéllar's centrist Union For el Peru (Union for

Peru) party. "Fujimori has been running a one-man operation and tried to clamp down on all voices of dissent."

Señor Ascueta, a left-wing activist who was badly injured by a Sendero bomb attack, seems an unlikely ally for Señor Pérez de Cuéllar's party. But he said he joined the campaign because the party "has emerged as the only force capable of installing democratic principles."

Señor Pérez de Cuéllar has also capitalised on growing

discontent about unemployment and poverty. More than half of Peru's 22 million people live below the poverty line.

Señor Pérez de Cuéllar's "international" background, however, could be a disadvantage, alienating Peru's largely poor Quechua Indian population. Another international figure, the novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, who had seemed set to win the elections in 1990, lost to the then little known Señor Fujimori.

Mayor faces FBI inquiry into poll funds

FROM TOM RYAN IN WASHINGTON

THIS corruption scandal that plagued his last term in office has returned to haunt Marion Barry, the Mayor of Washington, as federal prosecutors prepared yesterday to go before a grand jury with allegations that his wife had diverted campaign funds for his reelection to her family.

FBI agents and the Washington police launched investigations earlier this week into claims by the mayor's former housekeeper that her son was used as a channel by Cora Masters Barry to divert campaign contributions to her brother, Walter Masters.

Barbara Mouring, the housekeeper, and her son, Darin, 17, were in protective custody yesterday after she had alleged that a member of the mayor's security team and two other officers had threatened her.

Records show that the teenager was paid \$2,000 (\$1,250) in October by a political action committee supporting Mr Barry's reelection campaign, but the Mourings say he never worked for the group. Instead, they claim that Mrs Barry told them to cash the cheque and hand the money to her brother.

After journalists questioned Mrs Barry about the allegations, Mrs Mouring says she was taken to a house in Washington by Ulysses Wallower, one of Mr Barry's security men. Fred Gaskin, a retired police officer, and one other officer. She said they told her to retract the claims or face retaliation.

While Mr Barry's supporters believe Mrs Mouring is pursuing a vendetta against the mayor, for whom she stopped working in February, lawyers are taking her accusations seriously and have prepared papers for a grand jury investigation.

Mr Barry, whose previous 12 years in office were tarnished by corruption and ended in jail after FBI cameras caught him on film snorting crack cocaine in a hotel room, said last year that he had found God and promised to rebuild a clean federal capital.

America tackles DIY spies

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

AMERICAN law and order forces have launched a crackdown on the burgeoning do-it-yourself espionage business.

Federal agents swooped on 40 so-called "spy shops" in 24 cities across the country this week in an effort to keep illegal eavesdropping equipment out of the hands of drug dealers and other criminals.

Among the high-tech gadgets seized were scores of tiny Japanese-made transmitters hidden inside ballpoint pens, calculators and telephone jacks. Fifteen people, including three Japanese business-

men, were charged in what prosecutors described as an international scheme to smuggle illegal devices into the United States.

"This prosecution should cripple the sources of supply of these devices in the United States," said Mary Jo White, the US Attorney in Manhattan. "These illegal bugging and wiretapping devices are being used to deprive Americans of privacy, and to carry out such crimes as drug dealing, corporate espionage and kidnapping."

Law enforcement agencies

are concerned that the equipment is being used to thwart police investigations, particularly by drug traffickers. Officials cite the discovery of a transmitter in a shipment of Colombian cocaine, which alerted the drug lords to the presence of anti-drug agents.

Two of the people charged after Wednesday's raids remain in Japan. One suspect arrested in New York was a Japanese executive of Micro Electronic Industries Co. Ltd. of Tokyo, described as the largest exporter of illegal listening devices to America.

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Anne McElvoy on Natalya Solzhenitsyn, her 20 years of exile and the family's return home



Natalya Solzhenitsyn, a mathematician and former Olympic rower, risked prison to smuggle out her husband's archive in 1974, and organised the train trip back to Russia.

Trouble and strife of a Russian genius

Natalya Dimitryevna Solzhenitsyn is in full flow. Her intense brown eyes flash pure scorn on to the lenses of the world's press as cameramen and photographers jostle to capture her husband's first encounter in 20 years with the homeland that expelled him. "We are a private family," she raps: "a husband, a wife and their children. We are not obliged to take you everywhere with us. Do you expect to be invited into the bedroom too?"

History records that marriage to an illustrious Russian writer is not the most fertile of rose gardens: Sonya Tolstoy ended up mad, addicted to opium and finally excluded from her husband's deathbed; Dostoevsky's wife had to fight off creditors after her husband's gambling stints in Baden-Baden. More recently, Nadezhda Mandelstam was left to scratch a living and defend Osip's reputation after he was carted off to Stalin's camps.

To this extent, Natalya is part of a Russian tradition of

women devoted to difficult geniuses. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, as an exclusive BBC documentary of his return to Russia last year confirms, is a singular and solitary man, who has spent his exile in a self-imposed eremitic regime, learning only broken English and refusing US citizenship. But she has also become part of the Solzhenitsyn legend in her own right: his representative on Earth, amanuensis, and public-relations adviser, his Cerberus and the only person she trusts to type out and edit his work.

After Solzhenitsyn — whose views on the Western press are dim in the extreme — sur-
prisingly agreed to the producer Archie Baron's request to film his homecoming, the BBC paid for two train carriages for the Solzhenitsyns and the crew — who were only told about the confidential project at the last moment — and off they all set on the two-month journey.

The result is a curious and intimate portrait of one of the few undisputed living heroes: the reclusive who cannot stand the media with a fly-on-the-wall team in tow; the veteran of the camps finding himself greeted by bureaucrats with KGB eyes; the purveyor of a vision of a morally upright and spiritually confident Russia confronted with consumerism and mafia gangs holding up his train.

For all this, Solzhenitsyn, grumpy, demanding and autocratic, remains an impenetrable man, someone who needs the Word to make him flesh. Far more enlightening is the desperation with which the ordinary people greet the return of the native. "After the Almighty," says one elderly survivor of the Gulag, "there is Alexander Isayevich (Solzhenitsyn)." But he wisely wonders whether the writer can penetrate the new Russia, built on suppression of its recent past: "They have already surrounded his truth with their lies."

Twenty years younger than



Solzhenitsyn: impenetrable

her 76-year-old husband, a gifted mathematician and former Olympic rower, Natalya has spent the two decades in America ensuring that he has optimal conditions in which to write his magnum opus, *The Red Wheel*, a historical narrative including long biographical tracts and experimental techniques. Although Solzhenitsyn's reputation in the West rests on *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *The Gulag Archipelago*, and *Cancer Ward*, he is proudest of his last work, four times as long as *War and Peace*, but far less readable. "You practically need a grant to complete it," says one Vassar College professor.

After Brezhnev accorded Solzhenitsyn the perverse hon-

our of stripping him of his citizenship and bundling him out of the Soviet Union in 1974, his wife stayed behind and risked prison to smuggle out his private archive. In Vermont, she negotiated so efficiently for her husband to be left in peace that the close-knit community, initially offended by his reclusiveness, took upon itself the duty of protecting him from the gaze of pilgrims and interlopers.

She taught their three sons a Russian poem every day, made sure that they are bilingual, and runs the Gulag fund — a top-secret project in Soviet times — which diverts some of her husband's massive royalties to help the families of those who suffered in the camps. It was Natalya who planned her husband's 6,000-mile odyssey back to Russia through the Far East, lambasting the cowboy builders who have failed to this day to complete work on the grand dacha which was intended as a peace offering for the dissident hero.

"The family," says Baron, "live in a way which was common among the Russian intellectual elite in the 19th century but seems unusual to us today. Natalya carries an unbelievable burden of frustrating responsibility." Doughty feminists need not, during some frustrating telephone conversations with Ignat about the return, it struck me that this engaging young man with a demanding career spent a lot of his waking hours, now that his mum and dad are back in Moscow, acting as an intermediary in the West for them. He never showed the slightest irritation in taking dawn calls or replying punctually to midnight faxes. Once embarrassed at abusing his patience, I ventured that it must be tiresome for him to have to deal with his parents' affairs. "It's my role," came the instant reply. "It's what I do in this family."

● The Homecoming will be shown on April 10 at 9.30pm on BBC1.

Where workers queue to get in

A factory where it feels normal to be dodging wheelchairs while discussing psychotic episodes and Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* with an assembly-line worker is an unusual place. A supervisor near by is patiently repeating an instruction you heard him give half a minute ago to a man with an eager but slightly vacant expression. The man is straining not to forget again. A normal-looking girl puts down the bulkhead light she is assembling, gets up and turns out to be no taller standing than sitting. Two deaf men argue in sign language, and a shop steward with badly twisted legs hobbles to intervene.

This is Remploy's factory in Acton, west London, where 118 physically and/or mentally disabled people work. The goods they are making or assembling are as oddly assorted as they are themselves — saunas and cardboard boxes at one end of the low building, headsets and light fittings in the middle, then various printed circuit-boards for fruit machines and fire alarms. The 10,000 disabled people in Remploy's other 94 factories produce a truly extraordinary range of goods, everything from car parts for Rover and knitwear for Marks & Spencer and the American military, to electronic bits and pieces for Sony and Panasonic and Silhouette bras.

Jeff Cunningham, on headsets, is agitated. He can think of nothing but the gold watch he will be presented with today, when Remploy celebrates its 50th anniversary and he marks 30 years of service here. Asked what his disability is, he looks startled and says, simply: "I dunno. The labour exchange put me here." The idea of being anywhere else is evidently too appalling to contemplate.

Remploy was set up with government subsidies to provide "training and productive sheltered employment" for disabled people, many of whom at that time

Margot Norman on a factory that offers a sense of dignity



Tony Trimble: "Each of us is different"

were ex-combatants. Nowadays passionate integrationist campaigners for the disabled hope the plants will wither away. But is that what the workers want?

Some, like 16-year-old Anne, who came here straight from school, do feel the stigma of segregation. Her handicap is dwarfism, and she means to progress to night school and an ordinary job. Others, like Tony Trimble, the TGWU shop steward, started out with regular jobs. He is a cabinet-maker who joined Remploy 17 years ago when his disabilities worsened.

A thoughtful, plucky man, Trimble speaks for them all in one respect: "Each disabled person is different." Some want this support and segregation, some need it, others come to need it as they age. He never knew his mother, and no one even bothered to teach him to read until he was 17. Now he is a church deacon, a foreman and shop steward who in a former job led colleagues in a strike over safety hazards,

and a dedicated husband to his severely disabled and very demanding wife. He says disabled people understand others' handicaps better than the able-bodied do, but dismisses the idea that disabled workers are bound to be mutually supportive. "What you find here is that people have a grievance, so no, they're not that helpful to each other actually."

The factory seems a lot less sheltered than I expected. There are only seven able-bodied supervisors; there are no medical people hovering. Everyone is working away steadily, if in some cases slowly. The layout is more spacious than usual because of the wheelchairs, but the place is quite noisy. Tim Thorndyke, the factory manager, and Eddie Selby, regional manager, don't pussyfoot about with politically correct language or undue solicitude: they get on with competing for contracts.

This is not, therefore, an environment that makes more than the necessary concessions to its workers. Forty per cent of Remploy's workforce are mentally handicapped in some way, and the proportion — especially of schizophrenia — is rising. The man who suffered from psychotic episodes shudders at the thought of returning to an ordinary factory: "There are no malicious jokes here." He is both enthralled and terrified by his illness. "I just suddenly go psychotic. Everything's magical, the whole world becomes fascinating and you gain special insights. It's a great adventure but it's also very, very dangerous."

Who else would risk taking him on? For many of the people I met here, their job is obviously the one thing that gives meaning to life: this factory is their family and their dignity. If anyone doubts that it is needed, they should come before the factory opens at 7.30am. By six, a small queue of workers is already forming.

Dark side of the peacemakers

Joanna Pitman on how Japan is waking up to its war atrocities

The 50th anniversary of the first atom bomb is still four months away but already the city of Hiroshima is gearing up to become the national and spiritual capital of Japan's peace movement.

In spite of the martial traditions on which so much of Japanese culture is based, Japan has unambiguously proclaimed itself a peace-loving nation. "Peace studies" are taught in schools with the high seriousness that the British reserve for sex education.

Understood by the majority of the population as some kind of quality like heat or cold, "peace" can be heard all over Japan, chanted by priests, solemnly invoked by politicians and businessmen and bellowed by masked demonstrators.

If 50 years ago it was Japan's destiny to lead Asia into a new era of prosperity free of white colonialists, then now Japan's clearly defined duty, as the only country ever to have experienced the horror of the atom bomb, is to lead the world towards a new model of international peace.

But such things are not so simple in the real world. Japan's role as peacemaker has always been based on its image as the victim of Allied aggression in the war.

Since then, the image of Japan as victim has been maintained by the systematic rewriting in official history texts of the darkest wartime chapters, and by the refusal of successive governments to acknowledge, apologise or compensate for their country's brutal record.

To this day the Japanese Establishment believes not that it was wrong of Japan to start the Pacific War — it had no other choice — but that it was wrong that Japan lost it. As a result the Japanese people have effectively been prevented from understanding and coming to terms with their past.

But now the tide is turning to expose the fallacy of the official version for two reasons. First, the death in 1989 of Emperor Hirohito has released a number of cathartic confessions from elderly war veterans wanting, as all good Buddhists should, to cleanse their souls before death. Secondly, there is a growing body of documentary evidence of wartime atrocities hitherto officially denied, now being held up to the public gaze.

In his new book, *The Comfort Women* (Sovereign Press £18.50), George Hicks has compiled a minutely

researched history of the thousands of Korean, Chinese and other women duped, abducted or coerced into sexual slavery at the hands of Japanese troops as the Imperial Army swept across Asia.

The book's distinction lies in its mass of first-hand accounts by repentant soldiers, observers and comfort women themselves which together paint a chilling picture of the conditions of wanton cruelty in which these women lived.

The kind of evidence now beginning to come out in Tokyo courtrooms from for-



A wartime comfort woman

mer comfort women and their relatives is steadily adding weight to the case for a comprehensive reassessment by the Government of its wartime past.

Another recently published book of documentary evidence throws new light on the indoctrination of the nation by the military elite, through a perceptive study of the psychology of the Japanese during the war. In *It's a Terrible Truth*, a professor of social psychology, provides a devastating indictment of the Fascist misuse of education.

He also gives an account of the sadistic treatment of schoolchildren and military recruits which he believes provided the background for the horrific cruelty meted out to prisoners of war.

On the surface Japan appears to have moved further than most countries in the changes it has achieved since the war. But if the passage of time is measured by the hold of the past over the present, then Japan is still too close for comfort.

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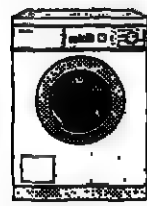
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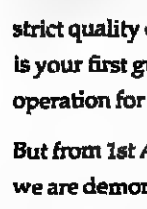
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There is very little more exciting than the reading of a will. Local newspaper columns and the Spectator's 'Will of the Week' depend on the vicarious excitement generated by the bequest of large sums of money, or the revelation of unsuspected poverty. And there is always that possibility which excites dread and observers pray for the pious conditional clause.

For so long a favoured theme for writers and film-makers, from Ben Jonson's Volpone to the 1948 film classic *Brewster's Millions*, the eccentric will-maker, who stipulates bizarre funeral rites, or demands horrible tasks of beneficiaries to exact some overdue revenge, seemed to have gone into decline in recent years. But the will of Sir Charles Irving, demanding that his

ashes be scattered from an aeroplane over the town of Cheltenham (see *Diary*, page 18), has recaptured the fun-seeking flavour of the maverick will, and may signal its return to fashion.

In the golden age of wacky will writing, the right to determine a beneficiary's choice of spouse was a favourite area for play. In 1971, Wilfred Thompson left £16,000 to his niece on condition that she never marry at all, on pain of the whole sum reverting to the State for reduction of the national debt.

In the same year, *The Times* reported that a man had been left £36,000 by his

The wilful minds behind a will

How far can a will go? Giles Coren unearths some bizarre instructions for those who inherit

son on condition that he marry a dark girl over 5ft 10in with an interest in classical music. He was allowed to charge courting expenses to the aunt's estate, but had to produce the women first for the approval of the trustees.

Then there was the grandson of the 5th Lord Hatherton who, in 1972, had to change his name from Percival to Linton to benefit from a bequest of

£100,000. More testing still were the demands on a dental nurse who had to spend five years without wearing make-up or going out with a man, to collect £181,000 left by her former employer. One Marjorie Lobb insisted that her house be demolished to prevent strangers from inhabiting it after her death.

Is the decline in such eccentricity to do with some change in the law? Not

according to solicitor William Heath of the Law Society Committee for Land Law and Succession. "I think we are just getting a bit more sane," he says. "The law has not changed, but the Cheltenham scattering could be challenged by the Environmental Protection Act."

There is no limit to what a will is allowed to stipulate. The only recourse is to challenge it as being contrary to public policy. For example, you cannot insist that someone marries a particular person and expect your wishes to be carried out — but you can certainly make their inheritance dependent on not marrying a

particular suitor." A more modern stipulation, made by one of Mr Heath's clients, who insisted that his son attend every home match at Blackburn Rovers, was also upheld.

"What changes is what is perceived as public policy. It is not written down, and what the courts were prepared to accept 20 years ago might be considered an infringement today."

When Gwladys Stone, of Glamorgan, decreed in 1979 that the wives of her five sons play a game of high-card draw to determine which would receive the bequest of a valuable brooch, the family were "surprised but not dismayed", and the game was duly played. Whether the burghers of Cheltenham will display similar stoicism and reach for their umbrellas remains to be seen.

Malcolm Bradbury on why he is leaving his school of creative writing at the University of East Anglia

'All writers need friends, however solitary they are'

For 25 years Malcolm Bradbury has been professing English and American Studies at the University of East Anglia, but more famously as *The Creative Writing Man*, "building a nest of singing birds in that windblown East Anglia". Now he is leaving to do some creative writing of his own. "Twenty-five years of living inside the work of other writers," he says, "is about as much as one skull can carry."

It is 20 years since I last visited Bradbury for Norwich to talk about *The History Man*, his satirical novel about the horrible sociology professor, I was then great with child and full of mid-1970s optimism. I found him musing the new university with ironic aplomb, a distinctly 1950s figure in Lasdun's concrete zigzag. He smoked a pipe and wore leather patches on the elbows of his tweeds. Today, at 62, he has grown into this fogeyish, astute, amazed to have lived so long.

Having been a sickly child, forbidden sport, and therefore bookish, at 26 he was featured in *The Lancet*, with "before and after" photos: the first patient to benefit from a heart operation which, they said, might help him to live to 50.

It was her devoted visits to him in hospital that made him decide to marry his wife, Elizabeth, a doctor of literary classics for radio, 35 years ago. When I arrived at the Bradburys' early-Victorian house, he had just finished reading Margaret Drabble's forthcoming life of Angus Wilson, who was Professor of English when Bradbury arrived here. It had rather upset him. "I came to UEA because of Angus," he said, "and what I discovered in Maggie's book is that Angus didn't like me very much. He rather feared this young novelist encroaching on his place, and was extremely worried about what I would write. It was

quite shattering to read how he'd been rendered anxious by my presence."

Twenty-five years ago Bradbury and Wilson had to battle with faceless committees to get the creative writing course started at all. Anyway, the course had no takers: Ian McEwan was their *deus ex machina*. He applied just as they were giving up. So McEwan was, for the first year, 1970, Bradbury's only student. McEwan was on the selection committee that appointed Bradbury's successor, Andrew Motion ("brilliant choice"), and when I asked McEwan's mentor he said: "I regard him as a mentor."

Now things have swung almost too far the other way: every poly has its creative writing course. What about the view that what we need is not to encourage writing, but reading? Bradbury: "I have a great deal of sympathy with those who say the best writers make it on their own."

But he is editing an anthology, *Classwork*, reflecting the success of his 200 graduates, of whom 40 are published — some (Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro, Rose Tremain, Clive Sinclair) succeeding faster than others. Some have become publishers themselves: some write about travel, or wine. At any rate, they acquired a network of literary friends ("And writers do need friends, however solitary they may be") and beat the Oxbridge mafia at its own game.

"I am rethinking thought and thought, and I feel provincialised by that," Bradbury says. "Writers from Oxford and Cambridge did seem to have a peculiar advantage of access, and friendship, but many non-Oxbridge people felt they could not get into writing because they didn't go to Oxbridge."

Things have changed. Forty years ago in his first novel, *Eating People is Wrong*, a redbrick lecturer, Treeco, con-

templates his pale-faced students, "Oxbridge rejects: he knows what books they will have read, what essays they will write... At that time, the first generation of grammar-school undergraduates (regarded by the old guard as back-street scum who didn't know a port from a sherry glass, without a background of culture and art, hadn't been to Italy) were just starting to arrive."

"Now everybody's new class. These who do have

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



access to that ancient culture talk it down; and if you start life with a cut-glass accent you end up talking Estuary, don't you?" says the Sheffield-born Bradbury, in impeccable received pronunciation.

And yes, the standard of literacy has indeed fallen. "And spelling is vastly inferior. But the most noticeable thing is linguistic inadequacy: not knowing where words come from. When we lost Latin we lost a learning system in the use of language, which gave a training in rhyme, the ode, the elegy, the epic, basic forms. We studied Wordsworth and Milton for their linguistic mastery."

That is lost, and the result is a falsehood about the nature of creativity, which is that it all spouts from inside, that the right to self-expression matters more than how you say things: it is about empowerment, self-assertion, identity formation, rather than a craft, a task, a training, involving humility in front of defined

ways of interpreting the world, established by predecessors."

Do his students accept this? "In a workshop, they are forced to, because every sentence is read out and examined by the group: it can get quite tense, and I often have to take the diplomatic role of the prisoner's friend. But they do become more careful about how they construct sentences." (He hates having to read out work in progress and cannot bear even his wife to look over his shoulder.)

He finds young writers, untrammelled by traditional forms, less constrained, more inventive. They no longer address themselves to social realism about contemporary Britain (as an exasperated scarp) but write fantasy stuff set in imaginary countries. "And instead of coming to the novel via Dickens or Waugh, they are more likely to read the Americans, the South Americans, and to be influenced by Quentin Tarantino."

He would prefer them to read Dickens. "Yes, I am old fashioned: I think people should imbibe and ingest a decent literary education in order to write well."

His farewell to the academic life is a new book, *Dangerous Pilgrimages*, charting the way America and Europe have mythologised one another. It fits in well with the thesis he delivered at the Britain in the World conference last week: that the United States of America is reinventing the United States of Europe for economic purposes, just as it once did for cultural reasons.

Now we face the end of a century, with no conviction about the next one bringing anything better. In 1800, political revolution, and the Enlightenment and Romanticism movements, at least shaped hopeful images. In 1900 the minds of artists, writers and thinkers were filled with exciting possibilities. "From the mythology of the new century came the enormous drama of radical new theories: relativity, psychoanalysis, sociology, Marx-

ism. Wells saw terrors ahead, but thought he knew the shape of things to come: new discoveries, futuristic cities, science doing unbelievable things. They were wrong, but they did have maps of the future."

What stares at the streetwise writers of the 1990s is just more of the same problems, and worse. Which is why Bradbury found so much to applaud in Martin Amis's new novel, *The Information*. "Not only is he a brilliant stylist, but he has invented a manner of world-weary pessimism, slightly reminiscent of the decadence of the 1890s except that this time there's absolutely no hope. The 'information' is that it's all over."

When he first went to America in the 1950s, he says, Herman Kahn ran a project called *Towards the Year 2000*. "Almost none of its prophecies have materialised. We would be living on the Moon, our cities would be space-age, we would have moved beyond the car, our standard of living would be permanently rising, the rate of discovery in every sphere would accelerate, we would have discovered a cure for cancer."

"Nobody foresaw the ozone layer, pollution, AIDS, the rise of women, the demise of the nuclear family, the consequences of drugs, or the effects of the same rate. Or the Internet and its massive questions: Who possesses verbal communications? Who manages them? What is their usefulness?"

At our last interview he gave me a rather cheerless tutorial on 1970s life: "Multistorey car parks, a world more hostile than gentle." Typically, today the lettering on the concrete of his faculty building says: "English and American studies" (No money for repairs.)

That night we both watched an apocalyptic *Late Show* and heard Norman Stone and others asking: "Has Europe a future? The 21st century is beginning to look medieval: a world ruled by robber barons, and plague-like disease... Time, surely, for a really savage comic novel from the emeritus professor."



Malcolm Bradbury: he says he can no longer live inside the heads of other writers

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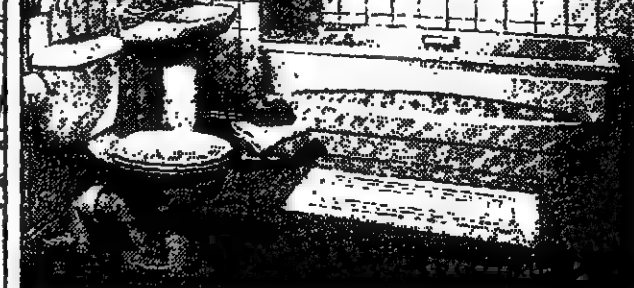
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The Bear looks to a new Yalta

It is in Russia's interests to foster confusion over Eastern Europe, says Jonathan Eyal

WILLIAM PERRY, the American Defence Secretary, concluded his visit to Moscow this week with the traditional toasts and polite smiles. The war in Chechnya has damaged Russia's image, but the Kremlin has now accepted — at least in principle — a European mission tasked with monitoring events in the region. With the bulk of the Chechen fighting now over, the International Monetary Fund has already approved new loans to Russia, and the European Community may well proceed with a new trade agreement with the Kremlin as early as next week.

The presence of both Bill Clinton and John Major at the celebrations for the end of the Second World War in Red Square in May will be the final signal that Chechnya was but a blip on an otherwise serene East-West "partnership".

Yet nothing could be further from the truth. The West and Russia are not talking to each other, but past each other. The partnership launched after the collapse of the Soviet Union has reached a dead end: from now on, confrontation rather than collaboration will dominate Russia's relations with the West. More important, the security negotiations which the West is proposing to launch with the Russians in the near future can only result in a new division of Europe into spheres of influence, precisely what everyone is officially pledged to avoid.

In short, all the foolish policies pursued by the West for the last five years are now coming home to roost. For a while, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the West assumed that Russia's desire to be recognised as a great power could be satisfied by symbolic gestures alone. Moscow was persuaded to support the war against Iraq in 1991, and expected full compensation for its stance. Instead, it was rewarded with complete isolation from the Middle East peace process. The Russians were told that they must stop supplying weapons to their client-states around the world and that, in return, they were partners in a grand effort to contain weapons proliferation. Russian arms sales, which stood at \$14 billion a year when communism collapsed, duly plummeted to a mere \$1.3 billion last year. Yet at the same time US arms exports to the Third World rose to \$13.5 billion, and British deliveries nearly trebled in value. As the proposed sale of a nuclear reactor to Iran now indicates, Moscow is no longer prepared to tolerate this situation.

And there is worse to come. For more than two years, the Russian Government has undermined the stability of many former Soviet republics, with the deliberate intention of recreating the old empire in everything but name. The West has greeted these events with sullen resignation, plenty of hot air and precious little else.

Russia has understood the game only too well

It did not take President Yeltsin long to work out that, despite all the fine declarations, the West is not particularly interested in Russian democracy — and that, since the West wants stability at all costs, the worse Russia's economic situation is, the more Western aid will pour in. After years of dithering, the West has finally realised that, without expanding further East, Nato, its most important military institution, will simply wither away. Moscow expressed its opposition to Nato's enlargement. The simple Western answer should have been that membership in the Alliance is what the East Europeans want. Instead, the West not only started talking to Moscow about it above the heads of the East Europeans, but is actually compounding the error by now proposing to negotiate a special friendship treaty with Russia before Nato enlarges.

The Russians believe their weakness is temporary; they have no interest in signing any agreement which renders it permanent. Thus, the only treaty which Russia will accept now is one that divides Europe into spheres of influence. No Western government will renege on the Yalta agreement which divided the continent at the end of the Second World War.

However, a second Yalta is still on the cards, at least by default. If, for instance, Nato accepts new members, but pledges not to introduce Western troops into Eastern Europe, the Russians would have achieved their objective: Eastern Europe will be nominally in the Western camp, but practically remain in suspended animation. The West's problem is no longer how to integrate some new members into Nato but how to prevent those who cannot now be admitted into the Alliance from falling under Russian control.

JUST AS in the 1930s, the East Europeans are considered as the subject, rather than the object of a Western policy. Just as then, governments believe that accommodating rather than confronting expansionist tendencies is the right policy. And, exactly like the 1930s, the assumption is that splitting the difference over Eastern Europe with the Russians can provide stability for all.

The Russians have understood the game only too well: they have just upped the stakes by threatening to default on arms control agreements unless they are compensated for Eastern Europe's loss.

Sooner or later, a confrontation between Russia and the West is inevitable and, as always this will come over Eastern Europe. And Russia will return to its traditional role, as a country which all Europe fears in equal measure both when it is weak and when it is strong.

The author is Director of Studies at the Royal United Services Institute in London.

The execution of Nicholas Ingram is nothing unusual in America, as Martin Fletcher reports

Beneath the headline "British Upset About Pending US Execution" *The Washington Post* yesterday ran a lengthy story about the "furore" in Britain over last night's scheduled execution in Georgia's electric chair of Nick Ingram, the British-born murderer. Such intense interest baffles Americans. The debate over capital punishment is all but over in the US; executions are now commonplace.

In a country paranoid about violent crime, support for the death penalty is running at a record 80 per cent. The rate of executions is steadily increasing, from five in 1983 to 11 in 1988, a record 38 in 1993 and 14 in the first three months of 1995 alone. A month ago New York became the 38th state to reinstate the death penalty since it was declared constitutional in 1976. The Supreme Court has now tilted decisively in favour, the death penalty is being extended to more and more crimes, and there is scarcely a politician in the country who has not jumped on the capital punishment bandwagon.

George Bush demonstrated the electoral potency of the issue with his devastating assaults on Michael Dukakis for being "soft on crime" during the 1988 presidential election. Democrats quickly got the message. In the following year's Texas gubernatorial

Just one more vacant place on Death Row

primary, one Democrat, a former governor, ran commercials showing him parading before blown-up photographs of all those he had sent to the electric chair while his rival, the state's attorney-general, boasted of having personally attended 32 executions.

By 1992 Bill Clinton would have destroyed his presidential ambitions had he refused, as Arkansas governor, to allow the execution of a murderer named Ricky Ray Rector, who had blown half his brain away during the execution of a vegetable. Few who know Mr Clinton believe he really favours capital punishment. A new biography of the President tells how in 1976 he sought biblical justification for the death sentence from his Little Rock pastor, Worley Vaught, to ease his conscience. Dr Vaught duly provided it, arguing that the ancient Hebrew translation of the sixth commandment was "thou shalt not murder", not "thou shalt not kill".

The death penalty's last really prominent opponent was Mario Cuomo, New York's governor. His stand, and in particular his handling of the celebrated case of Thomas Grasso, cost him re-election last November. Grasso had strangled an elderly woman in Oklahoma with her Christmas tree lights, then killed again in New York. He was first sentenced to life imprisonment in New York, and then to death in Oklahoma. Mr Cuomo sued to have him returned from Oklahoma, giving George Pataki, his Republican opponent, priceless ammunition which he ruthlessly exploited. One of Mr Pataki's first acts as governor was to return Grasso to Oklahoma for death by lethal injection.

What debate there still is over capital punishment in America centres on ways to reduce the considerable time it takes to implement the death sentence. America's death rows now bulge with nearly 3,000 inmates.

They can each expect to survive eight to ten years before they exhaust the appeals process, and at least one. Florida's Thomas Knight, has lasted 20 years. This makes the death penalty much more expensive to implement — roughly \$2 million a time — than life imprisonment.

Faced with statistics showing that the homicide rate has actually edged upwards since the death penalty's reinstatement, conservatives blame its apparent failure to deter on this inordinate lapse of time between sentencing and execution. But most ordinary Americans favour it simply on grounds of retribution and catharsis, and one senses that few are too upset by the occasional miscarriage of justice.

In Texas in January a man named Jesse DeWayne Jacobs was executed by lethal injection even though his prosecutor had changed his mind about Jacobs's guilt, decided he was

only an accomplice, and secured Jacobs's sister's conviction. The Vatican protested, but there was scarcely a murmur of protest in America. In 1993 a House judiciary committee report noted that 52 innocent men and women had been released from America's death rows in the previous two decades and concluded: "The chances are high that innocent people have been or will be executed."

Texas leads America in executions, having performed 93 of the 271 since 1976, and there is perhaps no more vivid metaphor for America's imperviousness to what most of the developed world considers a barbaric practice than the topography of the little town of Huntsville. Right in the heart of this small East Texas community is the Walls Unit, a vast red-brick fortress with watchtowers at every corner. It houses the state's death chamber. Charming tree-lined residential streets run up to the very walls of this hideous construction, and a Dairy Queen ice-cream bar completes the incongruity.

It remains a moot point, of course, whether British politicians acquit themselves better than the Americans over capital punishment. The latter may sometimes appear craven and unprincipled, but they can at least argue that they are responding to the public's will.

A tale of two kinds of justice

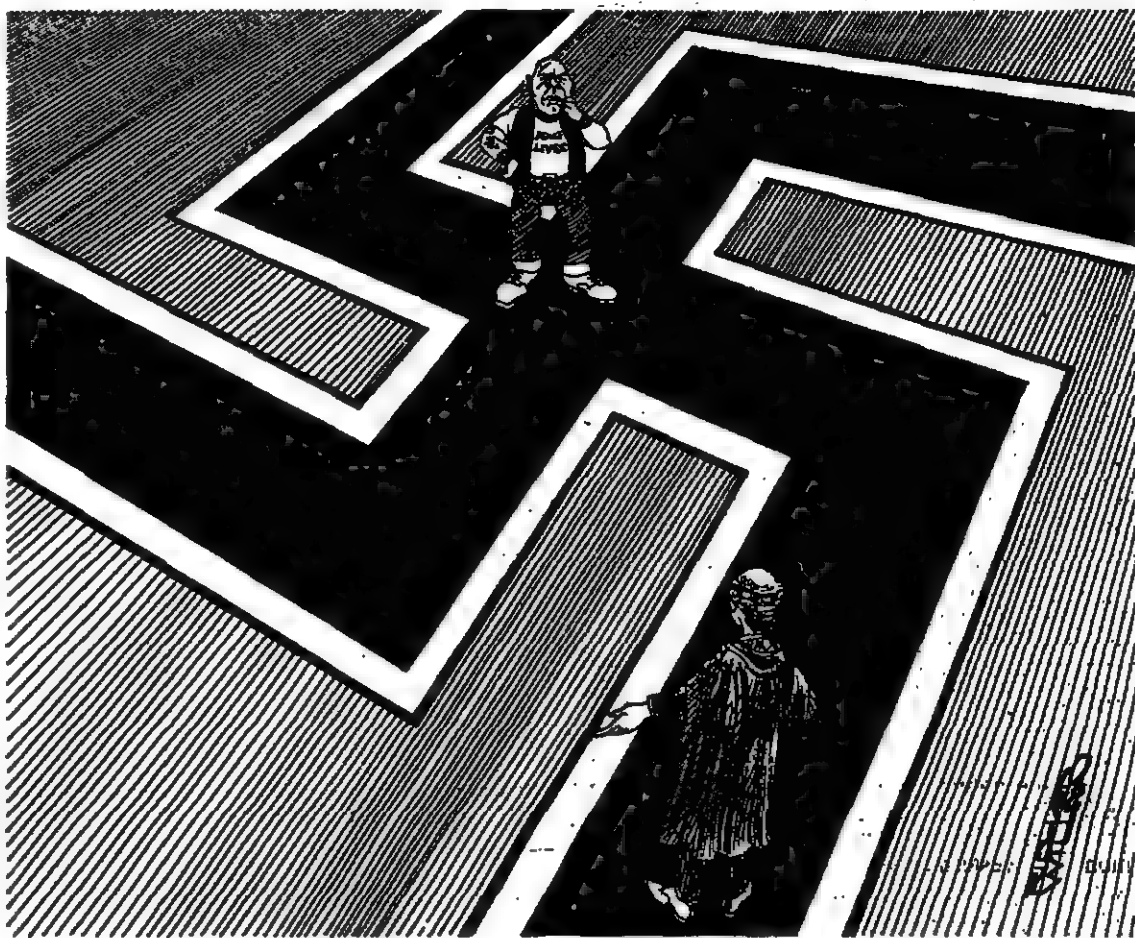
Not every punishment can fit the crime, but some can come satisfyingly close

Don't run away, but this is about judges and courts and people in the dock, but please, please don't run away! For one thing, it is not — as it usually is when I am about — a denouncing judges' (don't approve of, and for another thing the two judges in the two cases concerned here may never have met, yet they are bound together in a strange symbiosis. And indeed, if you stay the course you will find that this story is not really about judges at all. And in so far as it is about judges, one of them is almost very remarkably wise, and the other can see a joke, and even make one. But where there are two courts, there will be two central figures, and where there are two central figures, people like me seek similarities in the two, and occasionally find them. So if you read the story of the first episode, and then read the story of the second, you will realise that the universe is not, as some tiresome people would have it, random.

Let me warm up with the second of the justices. (I have only this moment realised that if the judge with the joke doesn't see it, I may be behind bars before lunch, so if this column breaks off in the middle of a paragraph, don't be surprised.)

It all began when Judge Mathewman was trying a case of fraud. Now I take it my readers know that, with very few exceptions, anyone can go into any of our courts and listen to the proceedings. On this occasion, a young man with matted shoulder-length hair — Simon Finch by name — wandered into Judge Mathewman's court, sat down and shortly afterwards fell asleep. I must point out that it is not an offence to fall asleep in a courtroom, and indeed many a judge has had so soporific an effect on the proceedings that practically everyone in the courtroom is deep in sleep in well under half an hour. (This, of course, could not possibly happen with Judge Mathewman.)

The young man, as I said, fell asleep. But he began to snore so loudly that he had to be awoken by the usher, whereupon the badinage began. "I am not having my court treated like a doss-house," said His Honour. "Are you asking me to leave?" said Simon. "No, I am telling you to leave," replied His Honour.



Bernard Levin

considering what the police found in his car. Now, the first of my two cases could be smiled at, though Judge Mathewman could hardly ignore the flagrant contempt of court — thus the two months in jail. The second of the cases would make anyone with feeling weep, yet Public Order Act or no Public Order Act, it would be wrong to imprison the offender. How so?

Listen to Mr Justice Holland; or, indeed to me. Simon of Thumb-Nose may spend his life in the nonsense that put him away, but he is only 23, and my guess is that he will grow up, and — if he actually have his hair cut — stop drifting. David of Down-with-the-Blacks stands at a crossroads, a crossroads which has a special nature; he can continue in the direction in which he was going when he was arrested, or he can change with the wind, and become an ordinary human being.

But if he chooses the same direction, he will have to go that way for the rest of his life.

David Draper was found guilty of nine offences under the Public Order Act; quite enough. It is not clear how he got into such muck, and even less clear how he can get out of it. As I say, if he goes to prison he will be lost for ever. But if he doesn't go to prison he will continue pouring out his poison in one or another way. How to square the circle?

Hear these wise words from the Bench. Mr Justice Holland told David Draper that if he jailed him he would become a martyr for his followers. Instead, the judge ordered him to do 180 hours community service in a year. "The purpose of the order is to enable you to put something into the community and not make hatred your contribution."

It is, as I am sure the judge realises, a very substantial guess which has been made here. The first prognosis is not a sunny one: in the court, Draper said that "a lot of people agree with what's on them stickers. You can't silence them all." and "I agree with all the views expressed in the documents that are in court. It's supposed to be a free country."

A probation officer (with a Jewish name) suggested in a report that

Draper could be put to work among the area's large Pakistani population. Physician, heal thy neighbour; but I cling to the fact that he is only 22 years old, as Simon Finch was 23, and anyone — Fascist, Communist or Maoist — who takes up a stand at that age and never leaves it is rare (and indeed three-quarters dead as well).

I told you, did I not, that those two courts — the one trying a silly young man on nothing in particular, and the one trying a very unsilly young man on something very serious — were part of a pattern? The irony will not be lost on my readers. I think the boy lazing at the solemnities of justice behind the bars, and the boy snoring at the solemnities of justice in front of the pats on the head.

The defence counsel, no doubt, when Master Draper takes over the country — may, the world — such foibles as defence counsel will be abolished, had a difficult task, but carried it out beautifully. Here is what he said:

He confirms today that he stands by his views. His reaction to being forced to work with an ethnic group was that he would not do it, but he would do so because he values his freedom. It may be that if he does that work he may see how misguided he has been.

No, David Draper is not going to take over the world, or Europe, or Britain, or London, or Westminster, or Euston Square, or the Burger King in the Haymarket. It is much more likely that the merry fellow who gave two fingers to the judge will take over the Burger King at Moundsditch and call it a day.

Is it possible that drug addicts can be weaned from their terrible fodder? Yes, certainly. Indeed, I know one such person very well, and I dare say many of my readers can say the same. The leap is wide, but we must jump. We must believe that the youth who worshipped Hitler and Himmler can be saved from his dreadful poison. Many would say of drug addicts that it serves them right, and that there are many good reasons to spend our money and time on; why should we try to redeem people who spit in the eye of redemption?

Answer: because even one saved from the burning is a triumph of goodness over evil. If David Draper listens to reason among the Pakistanis (I don't know exactly what his community service covers) that triumph would give heart to many of those who have given up.

Come, Judge Mathewman, you may be about to hear of something akin to a miracle, among the chants of success, would it not be a fine gesture to let off the next mildly wicked scoundrel?

Parting shots

SIR CHARLES IRVING, the former MP for Cheltenham who died last week, is proving as irreverent in death as he was on the Tory benches. He left specific instructions that his will should be read out in church during his funeral service. He also demanded that his ashes be scattered over Cheltenham from an aircraft.

Both requests are causing difficulty in the constituency he served for nearly 20 years. There are fears that Sir Charles might have decided to use his will to settle old scores and embarrass political opponents during the funeral.

"It would be very unusual, unique in fact, to have a will read out at a funeral," says the Rev Timothy Watson, who will be conducting the service on Monday. "I will discuss the matter with the executors of the will before deciding if this can happen."

The Civil Aviation Authority is concerned, too, about the ashes. "Recently we have allowed ashes to be dropped from aircraft but that was over airfields which are open spaces," says a spokesman. "A drop over the centre of Cheltenham is a little different. It might not be

very pleasant for the people."

Although these uncertainties remain, the MP most famous for turning the loss-making Commons catering services into profit, will be given a full civic ceremony in Cheltenham: his coffin is to be carried through the streets on a horse-drawn carriage with police escort. The Cheltenham Silver Band will play and his old friend



Dunnroamin? Lady Dunn

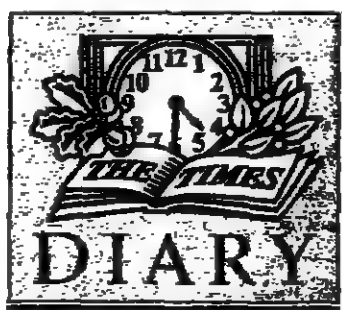
Dame Janet Fookes, the Deputy Speaker, will read an appreciation.

Uneasy rider

STOUTLY shrugging off the occasional twinge, Lord Strathcarron, the dandy of motoring correspondents, was back behind the wheel, test-driving in Co Down this week. The 71-year-old peer, a correspondent of *The Field* for more than 40 years, came a cropper on the parliamentary motorbiking groups recent visit to South Africa. "He shot straight over the handlebars after a minor disagreement with something in his path," explains a fellow peer. "Broke his collar-bone and three ribs. We had the most awful trouble holding him back afterwards. He was all for getting straight back on."

Home run?

SHE MAY say she's planning to stay in Hong Kong but, with the approach of 1997, one of the queens of the colony has bought herself a cosy little bolthole in the heart of Britain's royal county. Lady Dunn and her husband, the former Hong Kong Attorney General Michael Thomas, have snapped up Somersford Keynes House, near Cirencester, Gloucestershire. The baroness, a director of a clutch of top Hong Kong companies, will have the Prince of Wales at Highgrove and Princess Royal at Garsington Park as neighbours, but insists the £800,000 pile is strictly for holidays and the use of family and friends. "I have absolutely no plans to leave," she says. "I was born in Hong Kong. My family is there and we are both full of confidence in its future."



Baroness Thatcher was dismayed to be told to keep her speech brief at the lunch in the West End's Mirabelle restaurant for the British Red Cross on Wednesday. Her ladyship complained to Lord Archer: "Jeffrey, the Red Cross will only give me five minutes." Lord Archer was conciliatory itself. "Take as long as you like," he cooed. She took him at his word and talked for 20 minutes. The guests, who included Gordon Reece, Harvey Goldsmith and Anton Mossman, were thereby prevented from nipping off to a party aboard P&O's new liner, *Oriana*. "She carried on and on and on," said a Red Cross spokesman. "But they gave her a standing ovation."

Home fixture

THOSE looking for a little place in Manchester would be wise to avoid the house which Eric Cantona vacated this week. The chap who lives in Cantona's previous home, which the footballer rented while playing for Leeds United, has not had an easy time of it.

"We still get loads of people calling round wanting to talk to Eric or telephoning for him. When he attacked that fan at Crystal Palace the phone was red hot. We were sick of it," moans Philip Rannary, an innocent joiner. "When Eric was here he got loads of grief and had to change his telephone number 12 times."

The only saving grace was the troublesome Frenchman's largesse. He left behind four bottles of

champagne presented to him as man-of-the-match awards and a freezer-full of rabbits.

Fishy frenzy

THE SCENES at a party thrown by the upmarket Mayfair china store Thomas Goode on Wednesday night were a touch unseemly. More than 60kg of caviar was served but there was a bonfire each time a new dish appeared as peers and posers indulged in a wide-eyed feeding frenzy. "I've only had two plates," wailed the Marquess of Bath. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity." Then he spotted a waiter with a loaded dish. "Stop, stop, I must find a plate, where can I get a plate?" he cried, trotting off in agitated pursuit.

● Bunt Lewis, organiser of the Queen Charlotte's ball, wasn't quite herself at a tea-time meeting in the Lanesborough hotel, in London, this week by the new crop of debts. Her gliding step was marred by a large furry sock on her foot — the result of a skating accident. "I call it my petril," she said. "The chef is threatening to cook it."



P.H.S.

The high life of Bath



ELECTROTHANASIA

What execution methods say about a civilisation

For more than a century, the electric chair has symbolised the ultimate sanction of the American State. When it was first introduced in 1890 for the execution of William Kemmler in Albany, New York, the reason for the change was humanitarian: a state commission ruled that the bloodiness of the guillotine "did not accord with the temperance of the American people" and recommended "electrothanasia" instead. According to the US Supreme Court, the chair was a "step forward... based on grounds of mercy and humanity".

Such a claim may have seemed plausible at a time when electricity was associated with modernity and enlightenment. Today, it rings hollow. The gruesome horrors of death by electrocution are now widely known. In Georgia, indeed, they are made clear to condemned men in leaflets which list graphically the pain and appalling physical damage which execution will inflict on them. In similar spirit, death row prisoners are forced to polish the chair every day. Once a symbol of the State's humanitarian approach to execution, the chair has become just the opposite: the nearest thing the modern West has to the medieval stake.

The social significance of particular execution methods has often undergone such changes in the past. The English gallows began life as a symbol of the State's power to inflict painful death. "Albion's fatal tree", by the time hanging was abolished in 1965, its defenders were arguing that it was the most humanitarian method of execution. Likewise, Dr Joseph-Ignace Guillotin campaigned in France for the use of the machine that took his name, on the grounds that even condemned criminals have certain inviolable rights and that the State must show respect for the body it is about to destroy. In

the hands of the French revolutionaries, the *rasoir national* acquired a more complex significance. As Richard Semet writes in his recent book, *Flesh and Stone*, "figures of the past had to be killed in a certain way, the enemies of the Revolution literally taken apart, so that their deaths became a lesson". The guillotine became a great leveller, a way of bureaucratising execution.

Civilised societies need to be aware of the symbolism with which they invest the methods they use for capital punishment and ask what it says about them. The American people have shown themselves emphatically in favour of the death penalty, which was restored by the Supreme Court in 1976. Since then, it has occupied a central place in American political life. Bill Clinton's decision as Governor of Arkansas to authorise the execution of the brain-damaged convict Ricky Ray Rector was crucial in his presidential campaign. In March, the use of the death penalty was reinstated in New York; even traditionally liberal Massachusetts is close to renewing capital punishment. Yet the electric chair is used in only nine states, compared with 29 which employ lethal injection.

The latter method is no less abhorrent to those who oppose the death penalty; indeed, it is more so to some, who claim that the use of humane methods of execution obscures the fundamental immorality of capital punishment. Yet that is barely an issue in modern America. The more relevant question is what methods of execution each state uses. Lethal injection involves much less pain and distress than death by electrocution. On that basis, alone, it should be used by all American states which feel compelled to use the death penalty. The retribution involved in capital punishment is the denial of life: it should not be the pain inflicted in death.

TURKEY AND THE WEST

Ankara should be helped towards a dignified exit from Iraq

The harm being done to Turkey's interests in the West by its military operation in northern Iraq is already much greater than the damage it has succeeded in inflicting on the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). After more than a fortnight, the official Turkish military estimate is that its 35,000-strong force has killed more than 300 of the 2,800 PKK fighters which it claims are in the region. Opinion in the West is hardening rapidly.

Yesterday's decision by the European Parliament to withhold approval of Turkey's customs union with the European Union coincided with efforts by Turkish ministers to make their case in London, Bonn and Washington. As Douglas Hurd made clear yesterday to Hikmet Cetin, Turkey's Deputy Prime Minister who is himself Kurdish, the damage will be hard to repair without a rapid withdrawal.

The problem for the weak Government of Tansu Ciller is that whatever the worries of the Western-orientated members of the Turkish political class, this military venture is playing well not only among the pashas in the Turkish military but with popular Turkish opinion. Hence President Demirel's earlier hint that the operation might last a year and suggestions by senior commanders that troops could stay in "critical parts" of Iraq indefinitely. The PKK is deeply detested and feared; having said that the troops would stay until they had cleared the PKK out of northern Iraq, there is no easy exit strategy for the Government.

Mindful, however, of Mrs Ciller's trip to America later this month, Erdal Inönü, Turkey's newly appointed Foreign Minister, repeated in Washington yesterday that Turkey's aims are strictly "limited in duration and scope". Although neither he nor Mr Cetin has set a date for pulling out, there are signs that Turkey is casting around for a face-saving solution — and within weeks rather than months.

One idea canvassed by Ankara last week

was an internationally policed buffer zone, but in Washington, Mr Inönü appeared to rule this out. The UN, he said, "cannot do anything against terrorism". Another theoretical possibility would be to resurrect a deal which Turkey struck in 1992 with the Iraqi Kurds, who agreed to keep the PKK under control in the border region. But since then, the two main Kurdish factions have fallen out: Turkey has reason to argue that the fighting between them has created the chaotic conditions in northern Iraq which the PKK is exploiting.

Western pressure may not secure immediate withdrawal, but this week's diplomatic offensive is evidence that Turkey does care about Western criticism. While the fighting against the PKK is a vital safeguard for civilians, including the Iraqi Kurdish refugees who have been under the protection of the West's Operation Poised Hammer since 1991, the Turkish Foreign Office has had the good sense to countermand a clumsy bureaucratic attempt to close the border to foreign media. But access must include freedom to report: Mr Hurd rightly protested at the army's confiscation of film taken by Finnish freelance journalists, showing the bodies of seven shepherds allegedly murdered by Turkish troops near Azadi. The film must be returned.

The West's principal objective has to be to persuade the Turkish Government not merely to withdraw from Iraq, but to open a dialogue with the moderate majority of Turkey's Kurds. Its wisest course would be to declare the Iraqi incursion a success before its troops get bogged down and before the country is bankrupted — and to lift the ban on the pro-Kurdish Democratic Party. Ankara's dilemma must be acknowledged: the PKK is indisputably a terrorist movement. By relying on purely military measures, Turkey is digging itself an ever deeper hole. Its friends must be persistent in arguing the case for altering course.

DIAL FOR LANGUAGES

Switchboard operators now have the world on their hands

"Well, if I called the wrong number, why did you answer the phone?" asked a bemused character once in a James Thurber cartoon in *The New Yorker*. Based on the results of a recent survey of telephone switchboard operators in Britain and other European countries, one might sketch a cartoon along similar lines. It would feature a telephonist in Birmingham, for example, slipping a barb at a caller from abroad: "If you cannot speak English, why did you ring Britain? Naturally, it would not be half as funny as Thurber's tart original."

For anyone who has rung a British switchboard and dared to say "Parlez-vous français?" or "Quisiera hablar con el gerente de ventas, por favor", the experience can be dispiriting. More than that, it can turn potential customers off the idea of doing business with British firms. As Richard Needham, the Trade Minister, lamented on Wednesday at the annual National Language Awards, "between 20 and 30 per cent of British small to medium-sized enterprises have reported losing trade for linguistic reasons".

Mr Needham cited a recent survey conducted on behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry by Lingua Tel — a private interpreting and translation company — which found that an extraordinary 74 per cent of foreign language calls received

by British companies were abandoned at the switchboard. These calls, it must be pointed out, were made not in Tamil, Yoruba, Vietnamese or Estonian, but in languages such as French, German, Spanish and Italian — each one widely taught at schools and colleges all over the country. Compare and contrast with Germany, where 60 per cent of this with Germany, where 60 per cent of calls made in English were handled "fluently".

British exporters continue to rely to a striking extent on the ability of their clients, actual or prospective, to speak English, given the reach of our language, which now has the undisputed status of global *lingua franca*, this is understandable to a degree. Yet as nearly three-quarters of European enterprises do not speak English, our businessmen are guilty of a considerable commercial sin. In our age of aggressive competition, the most important business language to speak is the customer's.

Radical improvements in the technology of communication have meant that British companies now need to employ fewer people on their switchboards than they did in the past. As more young people realise the commercial advantages of learning a second or third language at school, can it really be that difficult for our exporters to find better-trained operators who are not simply monoglots?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Mrs Bottomley's announcement on hospital closures

From Lord Annan

Sir, For 30 years reports have been written and schemes put forward for improving medical care and teaching in London hospitals. April 5 and 6. Everyone who has studied the problem accepts that specialist services are duplicated, too few patients live near the sites in inner London and those in outer London are deprived. Everyone agrees that the first priority is to improve primary care and help general practitioners. Medical research has been hampered by too many small departments and isolated institutes.

We now have a blueprint for the future. There are to be four main teaching institutions, composed of a cluster of hospitals each attached to a multi-faculty college of the University of London. Certain hospitals in outer London are to be upgraded. These proposals have been aired openly for the last two years and the most astonishing complaint is that there has been no consultation. What has been lacking is not consultation but decisions.

In any reorganisation there are bound to be losers. In fact the announcement shows that the Secretary of State has done her best to sugar the pill: for instance to pledge that yet further studies will be made to see what medical use can be made of the historic Smithfield site.

Perhaps the losers should remember that many regiments in the Army, as proud of their traditions, battle honours and history as any hospital, recognised with grief but with fortitude that amalgamations had to take place in the interests of efficiency. They bit upon the bullet.

Those who want to stir up bitterness should reflect that, in northwest and west London, institutions which only a short time ago were refusing to surrender their independence are now co-operating and moving into a new and more enterprising era.

Yours etc,
NOEL ANNAN,
House of Lords,
April 5.

From Miss Diana A. Bond

Sir, Virginia Bottomley's hospital programme has been happening for nearly three years. For MPs suddenly to leap to their feet in apparent bewilderment at events which have irreversibly damaged and closed London hospitals defies belief.

It wasn't Virginia Bottomley who was scared to come to the House just

to confirm what she had already done. But the MPs who were frightened to confront her while she was doing it.

Yours,

DIANA A. BOND,
The Garden Flat, 3 Heath Villas,
The Vale of Health, NW3,
April 6.

From Lord Jenkin of Roding

Sir, The howls of dismay that have greeted Virginia Bottomley's announcement about hospital services in London fall very strangely on the ears of those who provide hospital and community health services in deprived inner London areas. The protesters seem to have lost sight entirely of the main rationale for restructuring acute hospital services in central London, namely, the need to channel millions more pounds into primary and community services in inner London.

Almost twice as many GPs in London work single-handed compared with the national average. In the southern part of Waltham Forest, which the Forest Healthcare NHS Trust looks after, 65 per cent of doctors work on their own.

Already, the Family Health Services Authority is getting significant help with extra funding to tackle the deficiencies and begin to bring primary care services nearer the standards that are accepted as normal elsewhere in the country. This trust is playing a full part by investing in health centres and helping the FHSA to build primary healthcare teams.

It is now widely accepted in the health service that what we now need is a primary care-led service. This is what patients want: it is what doctors have known for years to be necessary; and it is what the reforms in London are now beginning to create.

I wish to goodness those who keep harking back to 700 years of this, or centuries of tradition of that, would lift their eyes and look at what is happening around them. Those of us seeking to build a modern, community-based health service in London have little patience with those who appear to seek only to cling to the time warps of the past. Virginia Bottomley is to be congratulated for sticking to her guns — she and her advisers are absolutely right.

Yours etc,
PATRICK JENKIN (Chairman),
Forest Healthcare NHS Trust,
PO Box 13, Claybury Hall,
Woodford Green, Essex,
April 5.

Advice at a price

From Mr Peter A. Bellan

Sir, Civil servants hired Concorde for "less than £100,000" so that John Major could take 30 advisers to the USA (report, April 3).

That he needs so much advice is obvious, but could someone explain why these advisers could not fly in advance, by any airline offering return fares of under £300, not an average of over £3,000?

Yours faithfully,
PETER A. BELLAN,
Rose Cottage,
The Common, Dunsfold, Surrey,
April 3.

Major's hand

From Lord Quirk, FBA

Sir, The graphologists rabbiting on about what a letter to the mother of a condemned man might reveal about the Prime Minister's character (Diary, April 5) seem to have overlooked one notable clue: not short of secretarial help, he chose to write the entire letter in his own hand.

Yours faithfully,
RANDOLPH QUIRK,
House of Lords,
April 5.

'Madness' Oscar

From Mr Martin Childs

Sir, I was shocked and upset by Margaret Norman's article, "The madness of British film-making" (March 29), in which she suggested that I should have been awarded the Oscar this year for best art direction in the place of Ken Adam and Carolyn Scott. I was art director on *The Madness of King George*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, (The term "supervising" art director is sometimes used to clarify the pecking order in larger art departments.)

My job is to head the team which will help the production designer realise his ideas. What is seen on screen is his.

There is, quite rightly, no category at the Academy Awards for what I do. It can be measured only by the efficiency with which it is carried out.

This article not only trivialised the contributions of Ken Adam and Carolyn Scott to the film *The Madness of King George*, it also, by implication, did the same to Tim Harvey's work on *Frankenstein* and *Much Ado*.

Yours,
MARTIN CHILDS,
36 Cornwell Road, SE1,
April 2.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number. They will be sent to a fax number. They will be sent to a fax number.

Global warming

From Dr Robin Russell Jones

Sir, According to Matt Ridley ("Be wary of the greens who cry wolf", March 29) we don't need to worry about global warming because environmentalists are by nature alarmists, whilst scientists are "herd animals" who follow the consensus view. What an appalling misrepresentation of the truth.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established by the United Nations to provide a reliable body of scientific data as a basis for governmental decisions worldwide. Over 300 scientists have contributed to these documents and the chairman, Sir John Houghton, heads our own Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution.

Anyone requiring a sound scientific appraisal of global warming would be well advised to rely upon IPCC reports.

Mr Ridley is also wrong about the

Clause Four ballot

From Mr Andrew Tringham

Sir, Your report (April 1) Jeremy Hanley's claim that Tony Blair is a "Trojan horse", controlled by, among others, "lefties". As a constituency Labour Party secretary and self-confessed "leftie" I should be grateful to know exactly how I make the controls of this Trojan horse work.

With Clause Four ballot papers appearing on my doormat every morning, roughly ten to one in favour of the leadership proposals, the only conclusion I can come to is that Blair is absolutely in control and has the overwhelming support of Labour Party membership. While neither Mr Hanley nor I may like these facts, a claim that they are not true is really rather silly.

Yours faithfully,
A. P. TRINGHAM,
70 Havlock Road, Croydon, Surrey.

Heritage staff review

From the Chairman of English Heritage

Sir, I hope you will allow me to clarify some of the points made in your report of April 3, "Staff self-off defended by English Heritage".

Our practice at English Heritage is to conduct efficiency reviews annually. One of this year's reviews covers our design and works staff. This process is entirely separate from our intention to privatise, over three years, our direct labour force of around 200 people which was announced and agreed with the unions in 1992 and will be completed by March 1996.

Those affected by the design and works efficiency review are the "service providers" and are solely employed on the historic properties in our

environmental movement. From 1984 to 1989 I chaired the pollution advisory committee at Friends of the Earth, and during that time we campaigned for tighter radiation standards, the introduction of unleaded petrol and catalytic converters to control vehicle pollution, and the phasing out of CFCs and other ozone-depleting chemicals. The Government accepted the validity of all these campaigns and legislation has followed.

I have no doubt that the same will happen eventually with global warming. The danger of course is that the longer remedial measures are delayed, the less likely they are to be effective.

The importance of an international agreement at the UN climate conference in Berlin this week cannot be overstated.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN RUSSELL JONES,
St Thomas' Hospital,
Lambeth Palace Road, SE1,
April 5.

Monetary union

From Mr James Ford

Sir, In his *Panorama* interview on April 3 Mr Major told us that a decision on joining a monetary union must await the determination of "the input of the British Parliament" into the control of policy.

Article 107 of the Maastricht treaty, signed by Mr Major, says that the European Central Bank will not "seek or take instructions from... any government or of a Member State or from any other body" and that governments of the Member States will not "seek to influence" the bank. This makes it rather clear that the input of the British Parliament to the management of policy will be nil.

Yours sincerely,
JAMES FORD,
(Fellow in Economics),
St Peter's College, Oxford,
April 5.

care. The staff of Conservation Group, who provide the expert advice to other organisations and individuals, are not affected.

No decision on the future of the design and works staff has been made and any proposal will have to be agreed by English Heritage commissioners before being put to the Department of National Heritage. Whatever decision is made, all work on English Heritage properties will continue to be managed, and the work specified and monitored, by English Heritage staff.

Yours sincerely,
JOCELYN STEVENS,
Chairman, English Heritage,
23 Savile Row, W1,
April 5.

Attempt to curb child sex tourism

From the Director of Anti-Slavery International and others

Sir, British men openly admitted during Monday night's *ITV World in Action* programme that they are able to sexually exploit children in Eastern Europe. This investigation clearly highlights the need for this country to follow the example adopted in most other European and industrialised nations by introducing a law allowing UK citizens to be tried here for sexual offences against children overseas.

Campaigning for such legislation was one of the foremost aims of our organisations when together we formed the Coalition on Child Protection and Tourism last year. But the Home Office has so far opposed legislation, saying that it would not result in successful prosecutions. The Government's stance is likely to prevent passage in the House of Commons of Lord Hylton's Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill, which would allow for UK prosecutions.

So far the Bill has had two successful readings in the House of Lords, receiving backing from two former law lords and a former Solicitor-General. The final Lords reading is scheduled for April 19.

In the light of Monday's programme we believe the Government should reconsider its opposition to the Bill and take responsibility for the conduct of its own nationals whose actions are contributing to a serious and growing problem of child sex tourism, especially in countries such as Thailand, Sri Lanka and Brazil.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE ROBERTS,
Director, Anti-Slavery International,
MIKE AARONSON,
Director of Overseas Department,
Save the Children (UK),
JULIAN FILOCHOWSKI,
(Director, Caled),
DANNY SMITH,
(Director, Jubilee Campaign),
P. B. TYLER,
(Associate Director, Christian Aid),
Coalition on Child Protection and Tourism,
c/o Anti-Slavery International,
Unit 4, Stableyard,
Broomgrove Road, SW9,
April 4.

M25 widening

From the Chairman of Surrey County Council

Sir, In your report on plans to relieve congestion on the M25 (April 3) you refer to this county council's support for a proposal to widen the motorway to ten lanes between junctions 12 and 16. What the council has in fact said is that one possible option would be the widening of the M25 between junctions 13 and 15 (ie, from the A30 to the M4) to ten lanes. This is the only section built originally as eight lanes and the additional lanes would be wholly within the existing highway. The section of the M25 to A30 is environmentally very sensitive and is close to residential areas. The council would not support widening beyond the current eight lanes over this section.

Yours faithfully,
CECILIA GERRARD,
Chairman, Surrey County Council,
County Hall, Penrhyn Road,
Kingston upon Thames, Surrey,
April 3.

Reunion in Denmark

From Mr Norman Henderson

Sir, May I add a footnote to your obituary (April 3) of Wing Commander James Storrar. In the week before his death he had the spirit, though he was obviously unwell, to take part in the ceremonies in Denmark on March 21 marking the 50th anniversary of the raid by Mosquitoes on the Gestapo headquarters at Shell House, Copenhagen. He himself had flown with the Mustang escort on that operation, and it was inspiring to see him so and to see him with the group with greatly enlarged Mosquito and Mustang aircrew and with members of the wartime Danish resistance.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN HENDERSON,
Flat N, Dormy House, Potters Drive,
Virginia Water, Surrey.

Everyman spurned

From Mr Michael Churcher

Sir, I suspect that the reason for Axminster library's rejection of the *Everyman* volumes ("It's no man's library now", March 28) may have been the politically incorrect title of the series.

Yours faithfully,
M. J. CHURCHER,
12 Busketts Way,
Ashurst, Southampton, Hampshire.

All at sea?

From Mr Vladimir Rubinstein

Sir, As we watch the beautiful German-built *Oriana* slide into Southampton harbour (report and photographs, April 4) our "feel-good" factor takes yet another knock.

Yours faithfully,
V. RUBINSTEIN,
The White Cottage,
Harpsden, Oxfordshire.

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Piecemeal sale for Swan yard

Remaining assets of Swan Hunter, the Tyneside shipbuilder, are to be auctioned piecemeal in June after receivers failed to find a sole buyer for the company's Walsend yard. Ed James, a receiver from Price Waterhouse, said that although there had been some interest in the yard since its closure in November, no acceptable offer had arisen.

"The continuing substantial cost of maintaining the yard means that arrangements for a piecemeal sale cannot be further delayed," he said. A sale is expected to last three days and to include machinery and computer equipment. Swan's three other sites along the Tyne have been sold individually.

Off to Halifax

Seven of the nine directors on the Leeds Permanent Building Society board will join the Halifax board when the societies merge later this year. Malcolm Barr, Leeds chairman, and Geoffrey Avenidge will remain. The Halifax board will number 30 after the merger, up from 15 now.

Publisher up

Shares in Harrington Kilbridge jumped 19p, to 38p, after the troubled magazine publisher's appointment of a new chief executive, Ian Fletcher, who built up the Yellow Advertiser Newspaper Group and who is to inject £250,000.

Eclipse profit

Eclipse Blinds moved £4.4 million into profit in 1994 after losing £20.6 million in 1993 through £22 million exceptional costs. During 1994, Eclipse pulled out of making window blinds. It now concentrates on blinds distribution and timber products. Again there is no dividend.

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NOVEMBER 1994

NOW YOU'RE TALKING

Greenbank profits from overseas sales



Looking abroad: Martin Hynes, Walker Greenbank's finance director, left, with Charles Whiteman

By SUSAN GILCHRIST

A SURGE in overseas sales helped lift profits at Walker Greenbank, the wallcovering and fabric group, by 27 per cent last year.

Pre-tax profits jumped to £9 million from £7.1 million in the year to January 31 on the back of a 21 per cent rise in sales to £75 million, up from £62 million in the previous period.

Overseas sales rose by 36 per cent and now account for almost a third of group turnover, compared with just 5 per cent five years ago. Charles Whiteman, chief executive, said the group was aiming to generate half its sales from overseas markets within the next three years.

Mr Whiteman said the group had experienced raw material price increases of up to 40 per cent, but had been able to pass these on to customers. The group expects to spend about £25 million over the next two years to boost production capacity and lower manufacturing costs.

A final dividend of 2.3p (2.1p) brings the total payout to 3.6p (3.3p). Shareholders will be paid on July 4.

Tempus, page 26

MPs attack quality of England's regional aid

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

A CROSS-PARTY committee of MPs is calling on the Government to appoint a minister to co-ordinate aid and economic development in each of the ten English regions.

Better political accountability is urgently needed to improve the effectiveness of more than £1.3 billion a year of regional aid, according to a report from the Trade and Industry Select Committee. The committee called for regional aid to be refocused, to provide more assistance to indigenous firms.

Although the use of aid to attract inward investment had been a success, the committee said funds should be available to aid industrial restructuring

and development of new technologies and products.

Richard Caborn, the Labour committee chairman, said: "A wider cost-benefit approach centred on improving the competitiveness of the assisted areas and the firms within them, we believe, would be much more effective."

In an exceptionally hard-hitting report, the committee urged the Government to hold a review of regional aid policy as part of the Trade and Industry Department's second review of Britain's industrial competitiveness.

DTI regional aid has shrunk to less than £300 million a year, while European funds have grown to £1

billion and Environment Department aid for urban regeneration had increased in importance, the committee said. Improved co-ordination should be a priority.

At present, the committee said, administration of funds was poorly co-ordinated and bureaucratic. There were few objective criteria to ensure money was being spent effectively.

Among a list of 38 recommendations, the committee called on the DTI to "accept responsibility for improving standards of evaluation, that it lay down minimum requirements and common standards for evaluation, and that it withdraw funding from org-

anisations which do not meet those requirements or cannot demonstrate their effectiveness."

The aim, the committee said, should be to allocate funds to ensure the maximum impact upon "the competitiveness of firms and regions". The government should place this goal "at the heart of regional policy".

It said the delivery of aid to regions in England was significantly poorer than in Scotland and Wales, where organisations such as Scottish Enterprise and the Welsh Development Agency had scored considerable success.

Appointing a minister for each region would "remedy the democratic deficit" and ensure proper supervision of the ten new integrated regional offices.

"The present system is poorly resourced and badly organised," Mr Caborn said. "I am particularly concerned about the lack of political accountability and the gap between the rhetoric of local partnership and the reality on the ground."

Hope of 900 textile jobs for Ulster

By NICHOLAS WATT, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

AN INDONESIAN textile group announced yesterday that it hoped to create 900 jobs in Northern Ireland by 1997 in an £80 million expansion as business confidence grows in the Province.

The announcement came as Northern Ireland's leading ship-outfitting company pledged to double its size in a £4 million expansion. Myvan Marine will take on 120 workers at its factory in Antrim and a further 120 overseas.

Norfolk, a subsidiary of the Texmaco-Polysindo Group of Indonesia which is also based in Antrim, will set up two plants by 1997. The first plant, which will produce polyester filament yarn, will employ 500 people by early 1997.

The company has installed £30 million of equipment at the plant over the past 18 months. But the project, which was announced three years ago, was delayed by the recession and overcapacity in the world textile industry.

Pan European Textiles will aim to create 400 jobs by 1997 with backing from the Industrial Development Board.

Pennington, page 25

Miners cut shifts at bought-out pit

By A CORRESPONDENT

MINERS at the first British coal pit to be reopened in a workers' buy-out have been put on a four-day week. The 239 men at Tower Colliery in South Wales are now seeking new buyers for their top-quality coal as they can step up production and return to full-time working. They are remaining on full pay.

The pit at Hirwaun in Mid Glamorgan has a stockpile of 30,000 tonnes of coal, and the miners are still reaching their production target of 10,000 tonnes a week.

Tyronne O'Sullivan, 48, a former miner who is now a director of the company, said: "Our job is not to maximise profit but to maximise jobs. We want this pit to last for another eight, ten or 15 years. What we want is a long-life pit working efficiently."

The miners returned to work in January, eight months after they were made redundant by British Coal.

The pit currently has orders for two-thirds of its projected output over the next year. The buy-out team is now hoping to attract new customers in Europe for Tower Colliery's anthracite coal.

The miners each paid £8,000 from their redundancy cash to become shareholders in the pit.



O'Sullivan: protecting jobs

Nynex flotation delayed

By ERIC ROGLEY

NYNEX CableComms, one of the largest cable operators, is delaying its £400 million Anglo-American flotation by a month because the Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington has not approved its prospectus yet.

Nynex, owned by Nynex of New York, and the main cable provider in Manchester, had expected approval this week, allowing the shares to start trading within a month. Nicholas Mearns-Smith, chief financial officer, said he now expects trading to begin on the London and Nasdaq markets in early June.

He blames the delay on "real nitty-gritty legal-type stuff," not any serious shortcomings discovered by the SEC. Nynex's expansion plans will not be affected by the lengthened timetable, he said.

The company plans to split the issue between the US and Europe, mostly in Britain. It is the third cable operator to raise equity in Britain since November, when TeleWest Communications completed a £400 million offering.

Nynex also announced that Sir Christopher Bland, former chairman of London Weekend Television, is to become deputy chairman. Sir Michael Checkland, former Director-General of the BBC, and John Rennocks, finance director of PowerGen, will become non-executive directors.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.28	2.11
Belgium S	16.00	15.00
Belgium F	82.92	82.92
Canada \$	2.34	2.18
Cyprus Cyp	0.74	0.69
Denmark D	8.31	8.31
Finland Mk	7.42	6.77
France F	6.15	7.50
Germany D	2.38	2.15
Greece Dr	376.00	381.00
Hong Kong \$	13.10	12.10
Ireland P	1.05	0.97
Israel	5.25	4.95
Italy Lit	285.00	270.00
Japan Yen	152.00	138.00
Netherlands Gld	0.987	7.542
Norway Kr	2.619	2.389
Portugal Esc	204.00	225.50
Spain Ptas	208.50	2.38
Sweden Kr	12.54	11.74
Switzerland Fr	1.93	1.75
Turkey Lira	1.00	0.8873
USA \$	1.708	1.579

Notes: All small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at 08.00 of trading.

SFA orders a halt to unregulated business

By JON ASHWORTH

THE Securities and Futures Authority has clamped down on a City futures and options firm which has extensive dealings with clients in Germany. Philip Alexander Securities and Futures, based in Finsbury Pavement, has been ordered not to accept business from unregulated introducing brokers operating in Germany and other parts of Europe.

The firm has been instructed to close off open positions with existing clients. Small

groups of unregulated individuals in Germany commonly offer locals the prospect of high returns by investing in futures and options. These introducing brokers need outlets in London or Chicago to allow them to execute the trades. Philip Alexander simply carried out the trades on behalf of the foreign brokers, but instances of "churning" by the Germans are understood to have given the SFA cause for concern.

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LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

William Marshall Deceased
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the will of the late William Marshall, deceased, was proved to the satisfaction of the Court of Probate at the Principal Registry of the High Court of Justice in England on the 24th day of April 1995 at 11.00 o'clock in the forenoon.

LEGAL NOTICES

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FIRST payout rise in 7 years at Brammer

BRAMMER, the bearings distributor, is raising its dividend for the first time since 1988. Recovery in the UK and increased activity in France helped Brammer to increase sales, margins and cash flow last year, and the company is increasing the dividend by 0.25p to 13.25p for the year.

BSL, Brammer's core UK business of distributing bearings and power transmissions, lifted its market share while its French counterpart, Roulement Service, raised sales 22 per cent. Overall, pre-tax profits rose 70 per cent to £14.1 million, and Brammer is taking the opportunity to spread its distribution net into Spain by buying a 25 per cent stake in Rodamientos USA for £3.1 million in cash. Tempus, page 26

Wardle pegs payout

WARDLE STOREYS, the maker of parachutes and inflatables, is holding its interim dividend at 5p, reflecting difficult trading for its technical products division, where repeated increases in raw material costs have only partly been passed on to customers. In the six months to February 28, pre-tax profits rose to £3.4 million, from £3.1 million, lifting earnings per share to 9.1p, from 8.3p. Profits from technical products fell to £928,000, from £1.09 million, but the safety and survival equipment division lifted its contribution to £1.83 million, from £1.26 million. The shares fell 13p, to 35p.

Swallowfield rebounds

PROFITS at Swallowfield, the supplier of aerosol products, recovered to £2.56 million before tax last year from £1.63 million in 1993 and, for the first time, returned to levels which were last seen in 1990. Sales were £34.87 million, a record, compared with £28.6 million in 1993 and just £22 million four years ago, evidence of the steady erosion of margins that has taken place in the industry, according to the company. Earnings of 13.3p a share compared with 9.6p in 1993. A final dividend of 3.5p a share, due on May 31, makes a total of 6.2p a share (5.2p).

Ennemix beats forecast

ENNEMIX, the aggregates and ready mixed concrete group, is on stony ground as it announces its first preliminary results. The shares, floated at 63p in September, traded at 38p yesterday after an overnight 10p fall, although the group's £724,000 pre-tax profit was ahead of the flotation forecast. The proposed 0.715p dividend was on target. Shareholders are due to be paid on May 16. Earnings per share were 8.66p. The company said that demand would suffer this year because of a reduction in road building and uncertainty in the housebuilding industry.

Quicks drives ahead

AFTER a slowdown in sales of new vehicles in the second half of 1994, Quicks Group, the Manchester motor distributor, said trading in the first quarter of the current year was ahead of the same period last year. The company said it would benefit from moves by manufacturers, notably Ford, to reduce the administrative burden on franchisees and working capital requirements. Quicks reported 1994 profits of £3.9 million, before tax (£3.04 million) on turnover of £322.89 million (£227.7 million). Earnings were 10.5p a share (9.5p). A final dividend of 3.25p a share, due on June 23, making a total of 5.5p (5p).

Trafalgar man off Grid

ALLAN GORMLY, joint deputy chairman of Trafalgar House, has been forced to quit as a non-executive director of the National Grid because of Trafalgar's continued attempt to gain control of Northern Electric, one of the 12 regional electricity companies that jointly own the Grid. Mr Gormly was appointed last year in preparation for the Grid flotation expected this summer. When Trafalgar bid £1.2 billion for Northern in December he coped with the apparent conflict of interest by standing aside from Grid duties. Although the bid failed, Trafalgar has said it still wants bid talks with Northern.

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THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

□ Peace dividends are not to be relied on □ Virgin's video nasty □ The Not So Serious Fraud Office

Ulster's long haul

EVERY positive business move in Northern Ireland tends to be attributed to the peace dividend. In reality, it is a way off. Yesterday, for instance, there was much ado about the Indonesian-backed North polyester yarn plant, where recruitment begins this week and could eventually add up to 900 jobs. But that plant has little to do with the peace process and did not start work in 1993 but was delayed by recession on the Continent, its intended market.

More solidly, Belfast Aldergrove airport saw a 10 per cent rise in traffic in the year to end March. But traffic lagged behind the 35 per cent rise in seat capacity put on by airlines.

From a strictly economic view, normality is not a wholly wonderful prospect for Ulster folk. Thirty years ago, before the generation-long Troubles, unemployment was running at 6 per cent against a UK average of 1.4 per cent of the workforce and 3 per cent in Scotland, the most depressed part of the mainland in those days before oil.

Come rain or economic shine, Ulster has generally maintained the highest rates of unemployment, between three and four percentage points above the national average. The gap may not seem so great when unemployment rates are permanently

stuck much higher than in the postwar decades. But, in February this year, after all the statistical changes, official unemployment in Northern Ireland stood at 12.1 per cent when the national average was 8.4 per cent. Thirty years on, the relationship was the same.

Ulster's economic problems have not changed much either. It is remote from the centre of the Kingdom, let alone the European Union, and relies on declining industries such as textiles, shipbuilding and the arms trade. The European Community has made the biggest economic difference. Basic industries such as textiles can have a new lease of life as EU bases, relying on local expertise and earnings traditionally 10 per cent-plus below the national average. But not all those seeking grants are the sort of companies that should be welcomed.

Grant-based factories tend to be high-risk disposable ventures in Ulster as elsewhere. To avoid a high-risk branch factory economy, Ulster needs to develop indigenous firms and create new ones. Tourism and luxury goods may prove more worthwhile

than commodity production that would logically go to next in the queue of developing countries. But fewer businesses are created in Northern Ireland, *pro rata*, than in the rest of the Kingdom. Regional unemployment rates vary inversely with start-ups, perhaps because venture capitalists need a helping hand.

The more industry that Ulster can attract from America and the Far East, which need cheap European footholds, the faster its economic transition will be kick-started. Reversing the province's traditional relative poverty is a do-it-yourself job.

Branson set to tune in

IF, AS is being heavily hinted at, the Virgin consortium has come up with a novel way of returning a few million of the nation's video recorders without knocking on the same number of front doors, this would be a matter of great interest to other putative bidders for Channel 5, which is probably why Virgin is



being so cagey on the subject. The potential public relations nightmare that such an exercise presents must have put off a fair number of potential Channel 5 operators. Bidders will have to pass financial and programming thresholds, proving that they can both survive the ten-year franchise life and not rely too heavily on re-runs of *Lloyd's* to do so. But they must also indicate how they will overcome the problem of reuniting, and how much they believe it will cost.

For this reason if for no other, details of the various consortium bids will not be much in evidence until the May 2 deadline. Virgin TV, which is what it is being called even if everyone is keen to play up the role of the other

parties, will rope in another partner in due course. This will probably be a big provider of programming, this being the one area where the consortium is still under strength.

If it gains the franchise, in due course the business will eventually be floated, giving the various participants an immediate return on their involvement.

Virgin's entry into TV, although expected, gives rise to much speculation about where Mr Branson is going next. The alliance with Delta earlier this year makes any sale of the airline much easier. In a relatively short lifetime, Mr Branson has built up and exited the music industry, floated his company and then taken it private again, and largely got out of retailing. If he does sell the airline, as some speculation has it, it would be consistent with a lifelong and rather endearing habit of in-consistency, as would a rumoured interest in getting back into music again.

Virgin still has the cola, vodka and financial services ventures started this year. The signs are that Mr Branson will not be too

heavily involved in the TV side. But his ambitions clearly extend considerably further than fizzy pop and Peps.

SFO hits the small time

RAISE a cheer for the Serious Fraud Office, which has managed to win a conviction. Yeh Ahmed Khan, the former general manager of General Credit Finance, is now contemplating his fate after being convicted of fraudulent trading and four counts of reckless inducement to make a deposit.

In many ways this was a model prosecution compared with previous attempts to bring fraudsters to book. The trial lasted only six weeks, and the evidence was kept sufficiently clear to protect the jury and the judge from being completely bamboozled. This, after all, was a fairly straightforward case: people had invested money through General Credit, and the money is now missing.

There is only one small problem. While he was at large, Mr

Khan was only able to spirit away £700,000 of investors' money. By the SFO's own standards this hardly rates as a serious fraud since the organisation normally imposes a £5 million lower limit on the cases it investigates, although it can take on smaller cases that need it to exercise its impressive powers of investigation.

Nor could this case conceivably be considered high profile, since it was simply too small to fire the public's imagination. British prisons are still remarkably empty of big-time fraudsters. Perhaps if the SFO has more time on its hands, it can start investigating the disappearance of the works' tea fund.

Never mind, Mr Khan's misfortunes will do wonders for the SFO's all-important conviction rate.

Court order

JUSTICE is getting better and better for the many thousands caught on rogue Lloyd's underwriting syndicates and offered insulting treatment in the insurance market's failed global settlement. But justice is not much use unless real money is paid to meet real bills. For that reason, Lloyd's should have another go, this time using the courts' ideas of what is fair rather than interested insiders'.

Ibstock confirms an approach to Tarmac

By PHILIP FANGALOS

THE UK brick industry is set for further consolidation after Ibstock confirmed approaching Tarmac, the construction company, with a view to acquiring its brick interests.

Industry experts estimate the deal to be worth £60 million. The move would reinforce Ibstock's position as Britain's third-largest brick maker, behind Hanson and Redland.

Hanson and Redland have a combined share of about 50 per cent of the UK market for bricks. Ibstock currently has 10 per cent and Tarmac 5-6 per cent.

Any acquisition by Ibstock would see Britain's top three players carve up virtually 70 per cent of the brick market. Analysts expect this to result

in consolidation, which they view as positive for the industry as a whole. It may allow useful price rises as the companies exploit their market positions.

Analysts say that Tarmac, due to report final results next Tuesday, would benefit from cash raised by a sale of its brick operations. The division, which produces 300 million bricks from ten sites spread from Plymouth to the North East, is viewed as non-core by Tarmac and is believed to be valued at £90 million in its books. Its real value, however, is estimated at between £60 million and £70 million.

Some analysts say that Tarmac's management would have liked to have sold the division in 1993, but it would

probably have fetched only £30 million at the time. By boosting the division, and waiting for signs of recovery after last year's destocking, Tarmac should now be able to sell at a higher price.

Tarmac thought by some to have off-balance sheet debt of up to £100 million, would probably like to reduce that level to allow it to boost its housing output. It is also thought to be looking for acquisitions outside the UK, particularly in construction-related areas.

John Davis, Tarmac's media relations manager, said: "We have received an exploratory inquiry from Ibstock, but it is too early to predict the likely outcome of this approach."

Ibstock, in contrast, has been concentrating on its brick operations after recently increasing its capacity by 25 per cent, with two recent acquisitions in Scotland. Ibstock's brick making capacity was raised by 50 million bricks to 400 million last year.

It also unveiled plans last month to sell its 56.3 per cent stake in Companhia de Celulose do Cama, the Portuguese forestry and pulp group, with the stake estimated to be worth £46.7 million.

Ibstock, which is understood to be conducting due diligence studies, said it was too early to anticipate the outcome of the talks with Tarmac. A further announcement would be made "when appropriate".

Scholl shows a spring in its step

By SARAH BAGNALL

SCHOLL, the personal care products group, has kicked off the current year with its strongest trading performance in three years. Nell Franchino, chief executive, said current trading looked very positive after a year of tough market conditions. But he added: "It is too early to know whether these improvements can be sustained."

Mr Franchino unveiled a drop in pre-tax profits from £16.7 million to £2.8 million in the year to December 31. Profits were hit by a net exceptional restructuring cost of £9.7 million.

The group benefited from strong growth in southeast Asia and acquisitions, which partly offset the impact of tough European conditions.

Scholl warned the City in December that shareholders should not expect an increase



Franchino: a tough year

in the final dividend. The final payment, due May 15, was held at 3.5p, making an unchanged dividend for the year of 6.4p. Earnings before exceptional costs fell from 12.7p to 10.3p a share. The shares fell 2p to 146p.

Tempus, page 26

Mexico provision hits United Clays

By MARTIN BARROW

FINANCIAL turbulence in Mexico has rocked United Clays, the American subsidiary of Watts Blake Beane & Co, where the discovery of accounting errors last year led to the departure of the division's financial officer.

Watts Blake is now searching for a new president at United after operating profits fell sharply because of a provision against lengthening trade receivables from Mexico, a market that accounts for almost a third of United's sales tonnage.

The British company said United endured "a difficult and disappointing year" and needed to achieve a substantial increase in income to cover technical and administrative costs in order to generate an acceptable level of profit.

In spite of the Mexican setback, Watts Blake ended

1994 with profits up to £9.9 million before tax, from £7.7 million. The 28.3 per cent increase owed much to a strong performance by Devon Clays in the UK, reflecting growth in the domestic ceramics industry. Although growth in demand in Britain slackened in the second half, export sales improved throughout the year, with improvements in continental Europe, notably Spain, augmenting further strong growth beyond Europe.

Earnings rose to 27.9p a share from 22.4p. The total dividend is increased to 13.5p a share from 12p, with a 9.0p final payable on July 3. Watts Blake is 47.7 per cent owned by SCR-Sibelo, the Belgian company which narrowly failed to take over the company in an £87 million takeover battle.

Alfred McAlpine reports another gloomy year

By MARTIN WALLER

CONTINUING difficulties in the construction market hit Alfred McAlpine last year. However, the non-repetition of provisions from 1993 allowed the builder to increase pre-tax profits to £10.7 million from £1.7 million.

The figures included a £6 million loss from construction operations — despite sharply higher turnover as work taken on at the end of 1993 came on stream. Oliver Whitehead, the chief executive, said: "The construction market is tough and competitive — it has been, and it is going to be in future."

"We shouldn't be looking for a recovery. We should be saying, 'This could be the recovered market — we've got to find a way to make some profits in it'."

McAlpine's housing operations, however, boosted operating profits by 68 per cent to £17.9 million, on turnover of £181 million (up 47 per cent). The rise came from more completions and a higher average selling price.

The group is paying a 4.0p final dividend, raising the total by 0.5p to 7.0p, fully covered by 10.2p earnings per share. Earnings were 0.7p the previous year, after exceptional items of £6.5 million. The construction losses surprised the market, which marked shares down 5p to 145p.



Whitehead, right, and finance director Ken Lever

Tempus, page 26

Direct Line claims challenged

By ROBERT MILLER

DIRECT LINE, the insurer that revolutionised the motor insurance market by undercutting the traditional giants, has been reported to the Advertising Standards Authority for claiming to be "Best for Price" in its latest poster campaign.

"Direct Line, launched ten years ago, is now insured more than 2 million motorists. Its founder and chief executive, Peter Wood, is now a multi-millionaire."

The ASA yesterday confirmed that it had received a complaint about Direct Line's advertising from the British Insurance & Investment Brokers Association (BIIBA), which represents nearly 3,000 insurance brokers. Bill Lennon, of the ASA, said:

"The matter will be investigated. If an advertisement breaches our code, we can order it to be withdrawn or amended."

Competition in the £20 billion household and motor insurance market has now reached fever pitch. Premiums are falling as more and more companies imitate Direct Line's pioneering direct-writing technique of doing business over the telephone and as a result of the number of insurance claims having fallen over the past two years.

In a letter to the ASA, which last year received 223 complaints on financial advertising, Sharon Bolton, a director of the BIIBA, said that it objected to Direct Line's poster claim that it is "Best for Price. Best for Service". The letter said that a small number of its members had

supplied cases where they could beat Direct Line. Ms Bolton said: "Had I made my appeal public, I am sure that I would have received hundreds, if not thousands, of examples of how brokers have offered better prices than Direct Line."

If the advertising watchdog rejects the complaint — as it has over a previous poster that said "Best for Motor. Best for Home" — the BIIBA might take legal advice on whether to pursue its case through the courts. Ms Bolton said. She added: "Direct Line has many, many millions of pounds to spend on advertising, whereas brokers don't. We want the company to withdraw the advertisement." A spokesman for Direct Line said: "The BIIBA complaint doesn't really follow the spirit of what advertising is all about."

Golden 1994 for Cluff

By COLIN CAMPBELL

CLUFF RESOURCES had made several significant strides across Africa in the year ended December 31, and was now well on its way to becoming a major African gold producer, Algy Cluff, the chairman, said.

In fiscal 1994, Cluff produced a record 79,236 ounces (59,060 oz) of gold from its operations in Zimbabwe and the new Ayanfuri mine in Ghana. This year, Cluff's gold production should advance to 130,000 oz. Within the medium term, an annual gold production of 250,000 ounces is in prospect.

Every \$10 change in the world gold price has a \$1 million impact on the bottom line. Cash operating costs per ounce are expected to fall from last year's \$269 to an average \$220 this year, the company said.

Mr Cluff said prospecting work within Tanzania at the Geita project was going well, and that the company had ambitions to extend its exploration net into other parts of black Africa.

The group reports a pre-tax profit of £416,000 for 1994 compared with a previous year's £218,000 pre-tax loss. At the net level, and following a hefty provision for deferred tax, there is a net loss after tax and minorities of £1.2 million (£762,000 net loss). Again, no dividend is recommended.

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Source of figures: CFS Client Survey for Griffin Factors, September 1994.

Admitting video tape evidence

Regina v Clare

Before Lord Taylor of Gosforth, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Owen and Judge Sir Lawrence Verney

[Judgment April 6]

A police constable who studied video recordings some 40 times of a brief incident which was the aftermath of a football match between Bolton Wanderers and West Bromwich Albion in September 1991, was an expert ad hoc in the traditional category of qualified to give opinion evidence and had special knowledge that the court did not possess, so that his evidence identifying two men engaged in violent disorder was properly admissible.

Admitting such evidence served familiarity and an extension of established evidential practice, the answer had to be that, as technology developed, evidential practice would need to be evolved to accommodate it. While the courts had to be vigilant to ensure that no unfairness resulted, they should not block steps which enabled the jury to gain full assistance from the technology.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment when dismissing

appeals by Richard Clare, aged 25, and Nicholas William Peach, aged 26, from conviction at Bolton Crown Court (Judge Nigel Howarth and a jury) of violent disorder contrary to section 2 of the Public Order Act 1986. Clare was sentenced to 80 hours community service and ordered to pay £600 towards prosecution costs. Peach received a one month prison sentence.

Mr R. J. B. Green, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the appellants; Mr N. H. Simmonds for the Crown.

The LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, giving the judgment of the court, said that the appellants were West Bromwich supporters. After the match at Bolton, a brief fracas flared up between supporters of the two clubs amounting to violent disorder. The incident was brief and recorded in black and white by three video cameras affixed to buildings nearby.

The Crown alleged that Peach raised both arms two or three times, signalling to other West Bromwich fans to advance to Bolton fans some 20 yards or so ahead. When the incident was over Peach again raised his hands in the air.

Essentially the evidence on which the Crown relied was the black and white video recording, which was available to be played to the jury. However, because the incident was brief and there were many supporters and other members of the public milling about and creating a confused scene, what was actually being done and who was doing it could only be discerned by close study.

Police Constable Fitzpatrick had studied the film closely and analysed it, line closely with a colleague, had filmed supporters in good quality colour arriving at the football ground, when they were in the stadium and as they left.

PC Fitzpatrick had viewed the recordings of the incident about 40 times. He had been able to examine it in slow motion, frame by frame, rewinding and playing as frequently as he needed. By so studying the film he was able to follow the movements of individuals and see what actions they took.

By comparing the individuals performing violent acts with the colour pictures, he claimed to be able to identify not only the violent acts in the street but who was committing them.

The Crown sought to adduce his evidence in order to elucidate the benefit of the jury which could be seen on the video recording. Neither appellant gave evidence. The main ground of appeal related to PC Fitzpatrick's evidence. He did not know the appellants before that day.

As to the general admissibility of evidence aimed at interpreting what the jury could see on a film or purporting to identify actions on the film, their Lordships had been told that there were no English authorities. They had, however, been referred to Commonwealth authorities.

His Lordship considered *R v Leamy* (1987) 36 CCC 263; *R v Steele* (1992 SLT 847) and *R v Howe* (1983) 1 NZLR 618 and said that the phrase from *Howe* "expert ad hoc" ought to put witnesses like PC Fitzpatrick into the traditional category of those qualified to give expert opinion evidence. Whether or not the tag was appropriate, their Lordships were clearly of the view that PC Fitzpatrick, had, as stated in *Leamy*, "special knowledge that the court did not possess".

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While the courts had to be vigilant to ensure that no unfairness resulted, they should not block steps which enabled the jury to gain full assistance from the technology.

The appeals were dismissed. Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Manchester.

Carey v Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset

Before Lord Justice Bingham, Lord Justice Mummery and Lord Justice Hutton

[Judgment April 6]

A wide construction was to be adopted to the term "obstruction" in the removal of vehicles regulations and was applied to a vehicle obstructing persons who were using or who could be expected to use the road and was not confined to whether the vehicle occupied and impeded the highway.

The Court of Appeal so held when allowing the appeal of Mr Gary Peter Carey from the dismissal on May 13, 1993, by Judge Wigney in Bristol County Court of his claim for damages and declaratory and injunctive relief against the Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset arising out of an incident on February 11, 1992, when police officers towed away Mr Carey's converted coach and family home from the position it had occupied for some considerable time in Bristol for causing an obstruction to persons using the road within the meaning of regulation 3(1)(a) of the Road Vehicles (Obstruction) Regulations 1986 No 183.

Regulation 3 provides: "(1) ... this regulation applies to a vehicle which by its broken down, or been permitted to remain at rest, on a road in such a position or in such condition or in such circumstances as to cause obstruction to persons using the road or as to be likely to cause danger to such persons."

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The Employment Appeal Tribunal so held when allowing an appeal by the applicant, Mrs Angela Clark, from the dismissal by a Birmingham industrial tribunal in February 1992, of her application for the payment of a sum equal to 12 weeks pay in lieu of notice, pursuant to section 122 of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978.

The industrial tribunal had held that the applicant had failed to bring herself within any of the conditions set out in paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 3 to the 1978 Act under which an employee was obliged to pay notice money.

The appeal tribunal considered a point not argued before the industrial tribunal that article 119 of the EC Treaty gave her an independent right to payment and held that although the industrial tribunal's construction of the 1978 Act was correct, it was contrary to article 119 which prevailed in the event of inconsistency.

Section 122 specified debts of an employer for which the employee was liable on insolvency and included an amount which the employee was liable to pay the employee for a period of notice. Paragraph 2 of Schedule 3 provides: "(1) If (a) the employee is ready and willing to work but no work is provided for him by his employer or (b) the employee is incapable of work because of sickness or injury ... the employer shall be liable to pay the employee a notice payment."

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UNIT TRUST PRICES 29

[illegible]

30 EQUITY PRICES

Early gains are halved

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place ten business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996	995	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Moneyspinner at your fingertips

You have probably heard of the Internet. You may even be on it. Its rapid growth is also providing job opportunities. Experts in this fledgling information superhighway are starting to make a living providing consultancy services to the growing number of companies looking at the Internet as a new business opportunity.

Andrew Baul-Lewis, senior analyst at the research company Dataquest Europe, says that though most companies on the Internet are using it only for electronic mail, the number of new products and services being provided is likely to increase rapidly.

He says: "The problem at present is security — how can you ensure that a credit-card number sent over the Internet is safe? But within 18 months this will be solved. Then we will see all sorts of services on the Internet, such as electronic catalogues and other promotional devices, financial information, and share-selling."

"The market for Internet consultancy is big, and many companies

The information superhighway is full of opportunity, says George Cole

using the system do not have a definite business plan. Many are looking for people who can answer questions such as: 'How do I set up an Internet site? How much does it cost? How much information do I need to put on the site? And how do I promote my business?' There are not that many people with the skills to offer this type of advice."

Peter Lomas is European managing director of Stratacom, a company that recently added Internet consultancy to its services. Stratacom has about 670 employees in 21 offices around the world, but Mr Lomas says that there is no reason why someone with a good knowledge of the Internet cannot set themselves up as a consultant working from home.

He says: "A lot of companies

have their own private networks." At the same time, he adds, they are putting many of their operations out to contract, so they can concentrate on their core business. "They are looking for people to advise, set up and, in some cases, even run their communications operations. This is a growing business."

He adds that though big companies are likely to go to large and established consultancy companies, many small firms could turn to smaller outfits.

Richard Davies set up his Internet consultancy company, Good Technology, last year. Based in London, it has two full-time staff and one part-time employee, and specialises in technology for the music industry. Clients include leading companies, such as EMI, MCA, Geffen, Warner, PolyGram, and Creation Records.

Mr Davies, 31, studied biochemistry at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. On leaving university, he joined EMI as a graduate trainee, eventually becoming product manager. He joined MCA



Richard Davies: "When I told people what I was doing, many of them had not even heard of the Internet. A lot has changed since then"

Records in 1989 and left the company in early 1994.

"By then, I'd been interested in the Internet for a couple of years and it struck me as a good way of promoting music artists, not least because the demographic profile of the typical Internet user — male aged 25-35 — matched that of many music buyers," he says.

"I decided to leave MCA and set up my own consultancy. But when I told people what I was doing, many of them had not even heard of the Internet. A lot has changed since then."

Good Technology helps music companies to set up sites on a part of the Internet known as the World Wide Web, which allows users to

access a mix of pictures, text and — with the right hardware and software — sound and video clips as well.

"We give our clients advice on how to set up a Web site — what types of services and information to offer music fans, and how to keep things fresh," Mr Davies says.

"We can also produce the Web

pages for them. Now I am talking to a number of advertising companies interested in using the Internet."

"I know there are some companies, whose products you would not normally associate with computers, that are looking to use the Internet to promote their brand or image."

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THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

Hotline boost for homework

An Essex school has launched a service that will strike terror into the hearts of many idle pupils — a 24-hour "homework" hotline.

Parents at The Manningtree School in Essex can call the hotline to receive details of the day's homework schedule.

It means that the days when a student could return home after school and falsely claim that they had not been set any homework should be over. Manningtree, an 11 to 16 comprehensive, launched the homework hotline last month.

Parents can call up pre-recorded messages stored in a series of voice mailboxes. They can also use the hotline to hear information about GCSE coursework, holiday dates, school news and any emergencies — such as the late arrival of the school coach.

Another local school, St Helena, also has a homework hotline. Each member of staff has an individual mailbox for leaving messages. They are part of a service called Info-Connect, launched by Essex County Newspapers last autumn.

The service has 10,000 voice mailboxes, which can be hired by local businesses and services for advertising or providing information. The system is controlled by a computer, and each mailbox can be accessed by up to 16 callers at the same time. It costs about £2 a week to rent a box, although the schools have been given 49 free mailboxes as part of a pilot project.

One advantage is that it is not a premium-rate telephone service — three-minute off-peak call costs 5p. Other services offered include local traffic reports, news updates,

George Cole on a telephone service which keeps parents up to date on the latest prep

restaurant guides, and personal advice. Callers can also record messages for their local newspaper editor and their MEP.

The Info-Connect system was developed by the American publisher J. H. Zerby, and has been used by its daily paper the *Pottsville Republican* (based in Pennsylvania) for several years. Each day, the paper publishes dozens of voice mailbox numbers, and most local calls are free.

School telephone information services are quite widely used in America — 21 schools in Kansas have them, for example. A study revealed that when schools installed a phone hotline, between a third and a half of the parents used the service, the homework completion rate rose to more than 90 per cent and parental involvement dramatically increased. Many of the American homework hotlines are sponsored by local businesses which is something Manningtree is hoping to attract when the pilot project ends.

Tony Rivett, deputy head at Manningtree School, says that the hotline improves the links between home and school. "We send a lot of letters home, but they don't always reach parents — it is not uncommon to find a letter buried at the bottom of sports bag weeks after it went out. The hotline helps us to keep in touch with parents."

In the past, Manningtree set up a telephone answering machine service for parents of first-year students wanting homework information. The system was well received, but answering machines are not as flexible as a voice mailbox system.

The hotline mailboxes are accessed by entering a number on a telephone keypad and can be easily updated. At the end of each school day, a teacher collects the homework information and calls into the system. After entering a security code, the teacher records new messages in the appropriate mailboxes. The process takes about ten minutes a day.

Mr Rivett says that the hotline is designed to help students, rather than simply for parents to check up on them. For instance, if students forget to write down their homework, or lose their term planner, they can call up the hotline.

In its first week of service it received more than 200 calls. The school's administration staff say they also benefit, as many day-to-day queries can be answered by the hotline. There are also plans to use some mailboxes for parents to record non-urgent messages.

Mr Rivett thinks that the demand for telephone services such as the homework hotline can only grow in Britain. "They will never replace parent meetings, but they can give parents up-to-date information at the end of the phone."



Tony Rivett and pupils: the homework hotline improves the links between home and school, he says

First the mouse, now it's animal crackers
A user-friendly guide to software

BOB is a big yellow smiling face which wears glasses and is part of Microsoft's attempt to make software easier to use by employing cute animal characters. They appear in a new program which promises to automate eight household tasks.

One of them, Bob's dog Rover, will fetch information for you. Java is a dinosaur who drinks coffee, while Orby is a friendly Earth globe and Hopper is a bunny who looks as if he has been using amphetamines. Each character is designed to have a unique personality.

If you cannot figure out how to use the Letter Writer program, for example, an animal called Shelley the Turtle will help you.

Bob also includes a calendar, cheque management program, household manager, address book, e-mail, financial guide and Geo Safari, a quiz game. Additionally, it will let you launch other programs by pointing and clicking, or by asking Blythe the Bee for help.

Unfortunately it can take as many as 17 clicks with Bob to open a file. Most computer users will not stand for that for very long. However, Bob cannot be beaten for ease of use. The animals seem to know everything and children can run programs easily.

Choosing a colour printer for the home

Personal computers have marched into homes up and down the land and astonished us with their multimedia talents. But when it comes to putting things down on paper, most of us are locked into a monochromatic past.

Your screen may sing and dance in thousands of colours, yet when you print your work, everything is reduced to a world of black and white.

Those of us who have been using PCs for a decade or so are so used to the idea that we scarcely give it a second thought. But now PC owners have different ideas. Black and white cuts no ice with children who want copies of their natural history projects in every possible hue and tint.

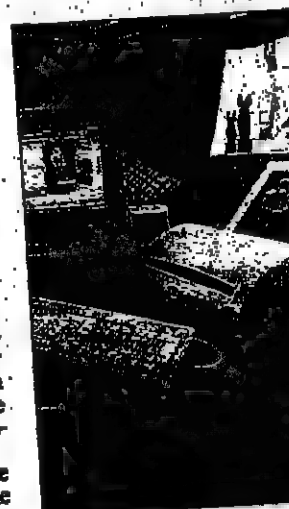
The colour watershed in my household was Microsoft's "Fine Artist" children's painting package which lets junior Rembrandts throw colour at a screen by the bucketful. So the hunt for a family colour printer began.

First of all we tried one of the cheapest colour printers on the market, the Star SJ-144. This is a thermal transfer machine which runs on a ribbon like that found in electric typewriters. The colour was, to be frank, appalling, the speed so slow the young could fit in an episode of the BBC cartoon *Animaniacs* between masterpieces, and the cost per page about 75p.

The only saving grace was the price — about £220 — and its use as a fashion accessory. The Star can print transfers on to special paper which you can then iron on to T-shirts.

Inkjets do a better job of putting the colour on screen to that on the page. But they have their quirks. Some have four inks, cyan, yellow, magenta and black. Others use only the coloured inks and print black by combining all three, usually producing a black that is rather purple, a little ragged around the edges

What qualities should you look for when shopping around for a machine?



Printers: pay £220 to £400

and not particularly suitable for everyday letter-writing.

The difference in print quality can be substantial if you mix colour images with black text on the same page. Canon's popular BJC-600 and 4000 machines — each costing more than £400 — print true black alongside the colours and, alongside the best results of the machines, looked at, though at a fairly high price per page of 30p to 50p.

However, in the eyes of its young users, there was little difference between the colour from the Canon machines and that of the cheapest inkjet we found, Olivetti's JP360, which is advertised for just £225.

The Olivetti claims costs of about 7p for colour pages and, using a separate, refillable black ink cartridge, little more

than a halfpenny for mono ones. So is it worth paying another £150 or more to get better black type alongside your colour artwork?

Many home PC users use a printer rarely. Machines such as the Olivetti, which lets you swap between cheap black cartridges and expensive colour ones very easily, are an ideal happy medium unless you really must have the top quality output of machines like those from Canon.

If you are running a business from home, you should think seriously about whether inkjets make sense at all. There is a business side to colour. Inkjets can normally cope with overhead projection paper and churn out handsome colour transparencies for presentations.

However, using the same machine to originate lots of colour pages — say for invoices — is rarely practical. It will be cheaper and produce better results if you have a colour letterhead pre-printed and then print the black page on your pre-printed material.

Whether the manuals may claim for monthly print capacities, these are not designed to be volume machines. A run of 50 business letters will pop quietly out of a decent laser, such as the Brother 630, in about eight minutes; the average inkjet will take the best part of half an hour.

The price of mono lasers is also falling rapidly. Morgan, the discount house, recently set a benchmark with the first sub-£200 laser from Mammesmann Tally. You need to add VAT to that — and, preferably, a megabyte of internal RAM at £30 plus VAT to speed up printing — but it is still a reasonable, if slightly old-fashioned, office machine at a consumer price.

DAVID HEWSON

Half board and PC, please

Hotels are tempting the high-tech customer

More and more hotels are offering their guests the use of a personal computer and access to online services. Geoff Wheelwright writes. At the Churchill International Hotel in

London, for example, business travellers staying on the club floors can hire a personal computer for £9.50 a day, complete with modem.

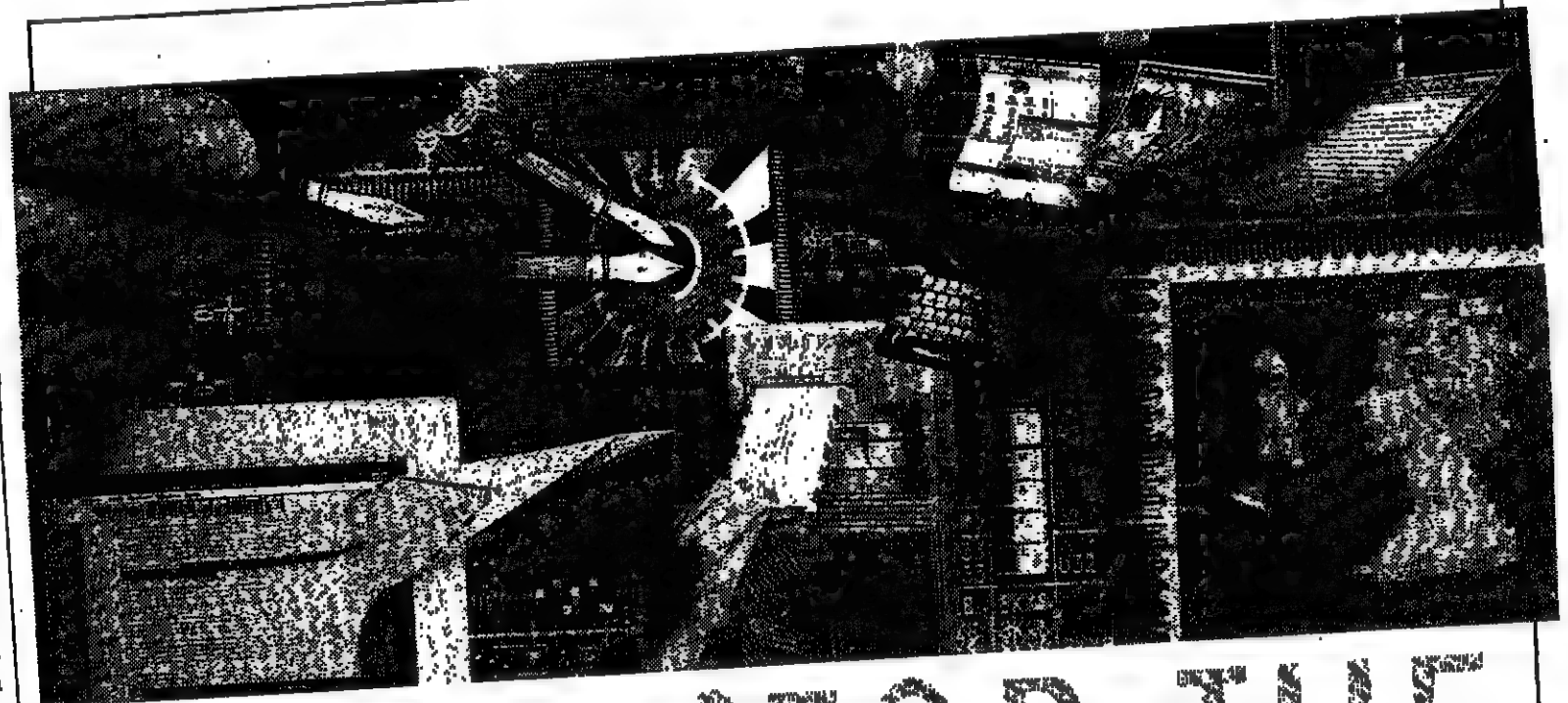
In North America some hotel chains are taking up the trend quickly, with fax machines, PCs and printers put in some rooms. Having a fax machine and printer in your hotel room eliminates the need to fiddle with fax modems and computer software. It also means that a customer can send and receive faxes directly, without worrying that they are going to get lost, or read, in the hotel's business office.

Much of the effort behind new kinds of computer-oriented hotel rooms in America is directed at making computer communications easier and cheaper.

Business users are frustrated by having constantly to pay for every call they make to a local online service from their hotel room when most American telephone companies do not charge for local calls.

The US Radisson Hotel chain now offers fax services without surcharge — as well as free telephone and computer line access for local, 800 number and credit card calls, and a data port for computer modem hook-ups.

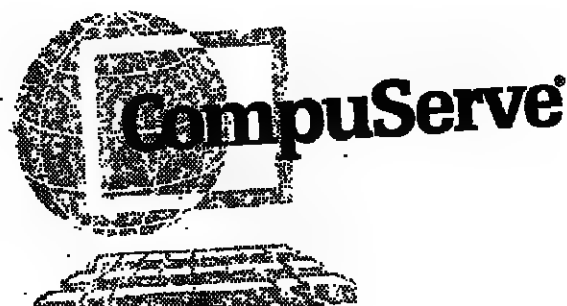
In Britain the problem is the huge mark-up put on phone calls by most hotels. This means that customers with mobile phones find it far cheaper to use them, even when in their rooms. Going online for a couple of hours in a British hotel room can be expensive.



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THEATRE page 35

Lucy Whybrow plays
Juliet in Adrian Noble's
updated Romeo and
Juliet at Stratford



ARTS

POP page 37

Never mind the music,
feel the artwork: a fair
verdict on Wet Wet
Wet's latest album?



And now, the unauthorised versions

Some of Britain's top poets will give the Gospels a provocative
new twist on television in Holy Week. Richard Morrison reports

Our greatest actor sits in a darkened 12th-century church and reads from the Gospels, while the camera scans a whole gallery's worth of Crucifixion paintings. It does not sound like the most original broadcasting idea ever devised for Holy Week, and even the magnificent presence of Sir John Gielgud — honeyed voice quivering with holy fervour — might not by itself dispel the suspicion that this is just another safe and cosy religious programme.

But *Words from Jerusalem*, which goes out on BBC1 every night next week, has another dimension. Joan Bakewell, who devised it, has asked nine of Britain's most distinguished contemporary poets to respond to the story of Christ's trial and Crucifixion. Their poems, delivered compellingly by the authors themselves, are intercut with Gielgud's majestic progress through the Authorised Version. The effect is to

add a distinctly wry — even provocative — gloss to the biblical story.

"We wanted to provide as wide a range of contemporary poetic responses as possible, in style, accessibility and attitude," says Jack Emery, producer for The Drama House, which made the programmes. "There was no question of using only poets who believe."

Thus the poems range from James Fenton's sceptical *Jerusalem* — a powerful portrayal of an intolerant world, which almost reads like a sequel to Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach* — to the triumphant affirmation of Peter Levi's *Easter 1995*: "I am washed as white as a clean bone/And shall arise out of my death and shine/And be revived and go where He has gone."

Liverpool poet Roger McGough puts himself in the shoes of Judas Iscariot's father in a poem (wryly titled *The Father and the Son*) that imagines the frustrated fury of those who expected Christ to lead an uprising against Rome. Guyanese-born John Agard, in a gripping poem called *Lucifer's Canticle for Gethsemane*, depicts the feelings of Satan as he watches Christ resist one final temptation.

Simon Armitage, in the slightly facetious *The Morning After the Night Before*, puts a monologue into Simon Peter's mouth after his threefold denial of Christ. Similarly, Carol Ann Duffy has Pilate's wife amplifying on her dream in very un-churchy fashion ("I woke, sweating, sexual, terrified").

I cannot say that I responded positively to every poem. Pauline Stainer's *Wound for a Crucifixion* seems to come straight from the Precocious Fourth-Form School of Poetry ("below the level of the crucified/angels clarify like syrups"). But eight out of nine hits is not a bad strike-rate for any anthology.

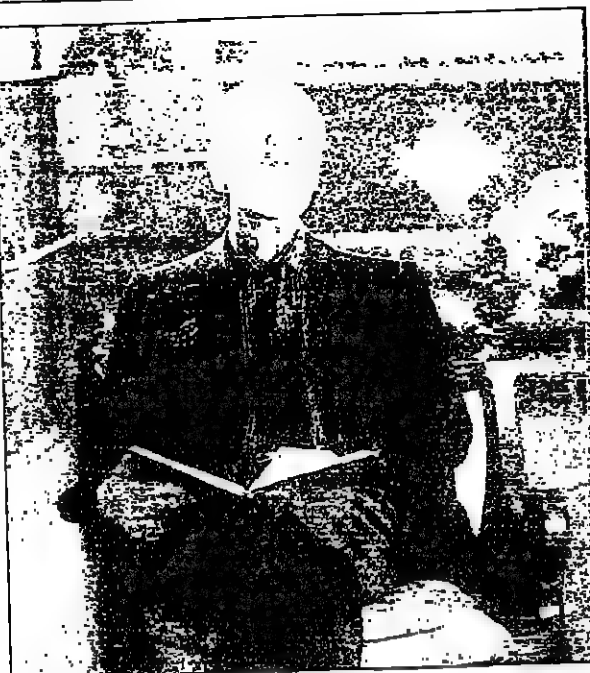
Emery believes his programmes demonstrate that "it is rubbish to say there has been a divorce between poetry and religion". Well, perhaps. But the great flood of Christian verse that extended from Donne and Milton to Eliot has undeniably abated.

In part, that reflects the wider cultural references available today. The contemporary poet can write a perfectly fine "religious" poem without dipping into metaphors specific

to Christianity. But the comparative decline in Christian verse does also reflect poorly on the "taste-makers" of today's churches: the priests who prefer the mindless blather of evangelical choruses to the provocative beauty of the well-crafted verse. Roger McGough, a practising Catholic, speaks for many when he says that he wishes poets had been recruited to improve the writing of the service-files so blandly and prosaically devised in recent years.

One week's worth of programmes won't rectify that, of course. But they do prove that resourceful writers can make something fresh and startling out of even the most familiar of stories. Fine poetry is a propaganda weapon that the Church discards at its peril.

Words from Jerusalem begins on Sunday (BBC1) at 11.20pm. The poems are published next week by BBC Education, price £4.95, available from PO Box 7, London W5 2GQ



Sir John Gielgud will read the Gospels in the medieval church of All Saints in Hillesden, Buckinghamshire

JAZZ: A master-class in versatility

Reticence cannot hide her talent

Barbara Dickson
Café Royal

Barbara Dickson makes life extremely difficult for reviewers. Just when you thought you had pinned her down as a folkie turned MOR rocker with a yen for James Taylor, along comes a brittle reworking of Kurt Weill's *September Song* or a romp through *Political Science*, a Randy Newman hand grenade tossed towards Insular Middle America. Dickson has been confounding expectations elsewhere, delivering a feisty, hollow-eyed performance in *Band of Gold*, Granada's unglamorous drama series about streetwalkers.

For her visit to the Café Royal she had, thankfully, exchanged the garish, low-rent outfits for a chic dark suit. Her choice of material was equally sophisticated, even if the combination of colours and tones was rather less orthodox. Not many singers would dare perform the Depression-era lament *Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?* in the same set as a ballad from *Sunset Boulevard*. Dickson has enough sensitivity to make the transition without slipping into bathos. That soaring voice would be worth hearing even if it only had the Green Room's menu to work with.

The great advantage of hearing her in a small venue is that nothing gets in the way of the vocals. No ponderous drum beat, no churning, over-amplified keyboards. Instead, Dickson receives delicately shaded support from Jerry Stephenson's low-key guitar, Barry Thompson's piano and, above all, the versatile saxophones and flute of Pete Zorn.

After opening with *The Caravan Song*, Dickson zig-zagged through ballads by Sandy Denny, Sondheim and one of Randy Newman's more

tender compositions, *Sandman's Coming*. Low Hurts, the theme song from *Band of Gold*, was left for the encore, the slow tempo yielding the full measure of sorrow.

Even today a certain styness infuses her live act — as if, after all these years, she is still unsure that the audience is willing to follow her. On some numbers you long for her to cut loose and let the emotions flow more freely. Her version of *(You Make Me Feel Like) A*



Dickson: rare repertoire

Natural Woman lacked the passion of Aretha Franklin's.

If Dickson appears reticent, she also brings an actress's insights to a lyric. She could, if she wished, emerge as a more homely version of the would-be sex kitten Ute Lemper. Unlike Lemper, Dickson does not need to keep showing off her legs in order to draw us into her world. The voice does the work.

CLIVE DAVIS

RECITAL: Russian song at its finest

Grand passions from Kirov stars

Diadkova/Gergieva
Wigmore Hall

THE two mighty Larissas of St Petersburg bestrode the Wigmore Hall stage on Tuesday, as part of the continuing Maryinsky-Kirov song-recital series. Larissa Diadkova is one of the Kirov's leading mezzo-sopranos. She has been heard, and remembered, in Britain ever since her parts in *Iolanta*, *Alexander Nevsky* and *Kashchkei the Immortal*. Larissa Gergieva is pianist and *répétiteur* supreme and, as well as providing unforgettable accompaniments for many singers in this series, has prepared *Otello* for her brother, Valery, to conduct.

Unlike some of her colleagues, Diadkova directs the audience's attention solely to the music, never to herself. Yet, within each vivid salon drama in a group of Glinka songs, one constantly marvelled at the effortless integration and impetus of a voice that could fling out the flame of desire at one moment, only to confide, as if to a single audience member, at the next.

This ability to find seemingly infinite resources of power in both the chest and the head voice, without the listener ever being distracted away from the core of the music, is

Diadkova's particular skill. Sets and lighting, as it were, were provided by the heightened imagination and rare technique of Gergieva's piano playing for Rattmire's long recitative and aria from *Ruslan and Ludmilla*. If a London piano in a London hall can sound like this, complaints from certain quarters could bear re-examination.

After the interval, Diadkova and Gergieva turned to the poison and poignancy of two songs by Borodin, before a chilling interpretation of Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death*. Here was Death minutely characterised: with the tenderness of a lover, the sensuousness of a mother, the menace of a dancemaster and the eternal vicarious command of a field marshal. His act could be followed, his shadow dispelled, only by a coup of programming such as Shostakovich's *Two Fables*: some *Dragonfly*, then: some *Ant*, some *Nightingale*!

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THE TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale on Shakespeare's missing ingredients; plus uneven Molière

Sonneteering without the sex

DONALD COOPER

Romeo and Juliet
Royal Shakespeare Theatre

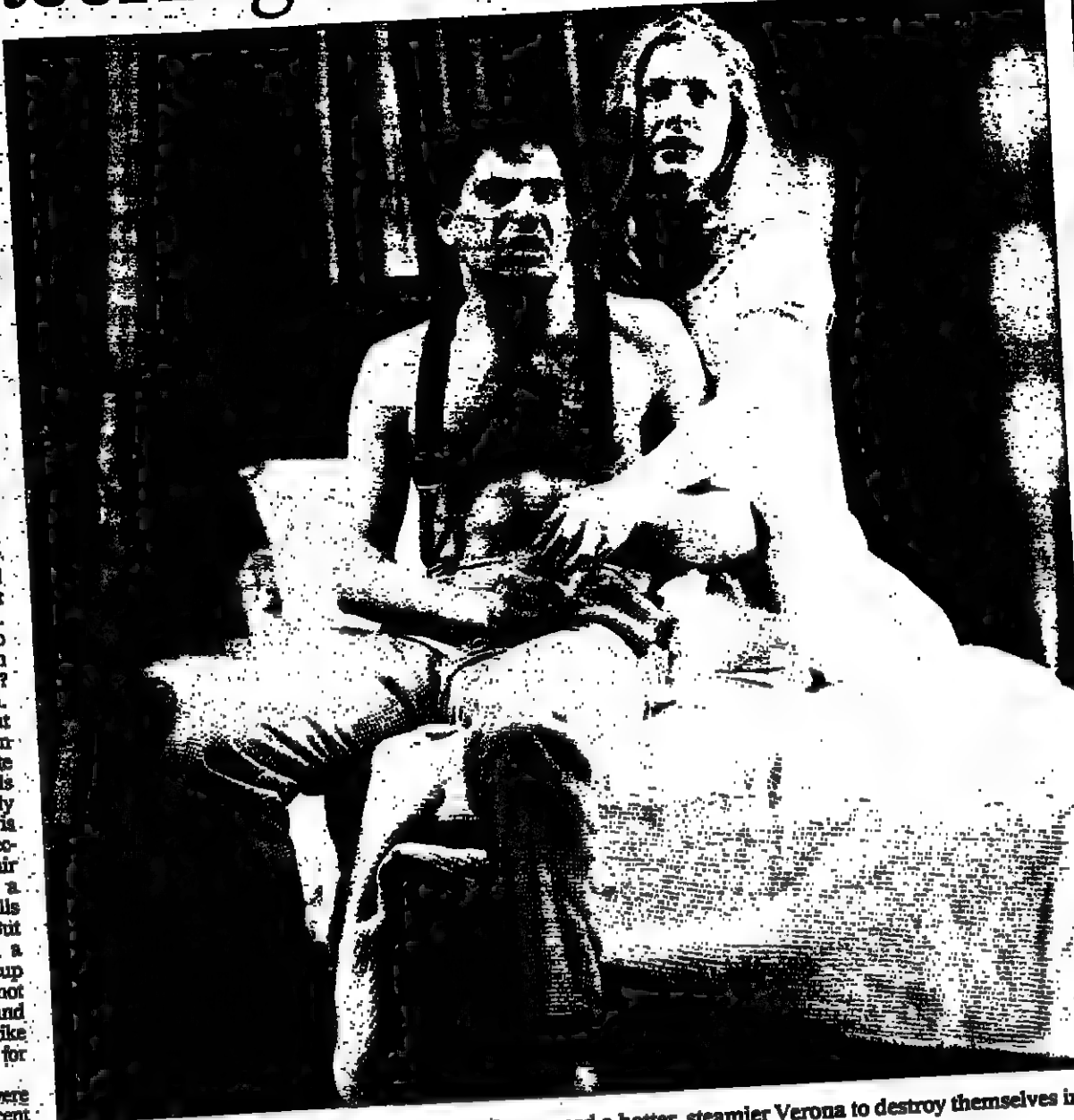
As Zubin Varla's Romeo gives Lucy Whybrow's Juliet a pecking kiss, and prepares to swallow his Mickey Mouse, an unusual thing happens. The supposed corpse's arm rises behind his back as if to return his embrace and, still unseen by him, falls back. Romeo is, just seconds from twiggling that Juliet is alive. If only the Mantuan apothecary had used a modern safety cap, the kind that takes a good minute to twist open, maybe Shakespeare would have written one tragedy less and one romantic comedy more.

Forgive the facetiousness, but there is something about Adrian Noble's production that fails to thrill. The evening is strong on detail and often handsome to look at. There are one or two performances that work well, and one or two that don't work at all. But some essential ingredients are missing. Do we see why the lovers behave so self-destructively or care very much when they actually destroy themselves? Speaking for myself, no and no again.

It is unwise to lay down laws about Shakespearean production, for an inspired director will always rewrite them. But the most successful revivals of *Romeo* I have seen have directly linked Verona and the lovers. There is a madness, a danger, almost a collective death-wish in the hot, humid air that affects everyone, and explains a marriage which Juliet herself calls "rash, unadvised and sudden". But though the production opens with a Capulet rudely knocking a coffee cup out of a Montague's hands, I did not sense very much of that in and around the café that half-fills the Chirco-like piazza. Kenda Ulyatt has designed for Noble's early 20th-century idlers.

Nor did I sense it when we were taken behind Capulet's magnificent wrought-iron gates and plunged into what was less an improvised party, more a lavish coming-out ball for Juliet. Neither Christopher Benjamin nor Darlene Johnson, playing her parents, does enough in the early stages to prepare us for the seemingly unmotivated savagery with which they treat her later. Dermot Kerrigan's Tybalt could be more unruly and more important, so could Mark Lockyer's Mercutio.

Mercutio nowadays tend to exude more modern ennui than traditional charm, but seldom so oddly. Lockyer is less angry and violent, as Bernard Lloyd and Tim McInerney were, than



Doomed lovers Zubin Varla and Lucy Whybrow need a hotter, steamier Verona to destroy themselves in

clownish and a bit unhinged. His comrades stop the Queen Mab speech, not because it is getting boring, but because it is edging him towards nervous breakdown. I would diagnose sexual insecurity (a drag disguise for Capulet's ball) and alcoholism (a funny line sadly garbled). Whatever the clinical picture, it does not explain why the lovers are what they are.

So what of them? Both emphasize youth and inexperience rather than endemic wildness. Varla's voice is light, high and callow, as if it had

broken not long ago. Whybrow goes further, suggesting a restlessness and shrill impatience behind her undoubted simplicity and sweetness. Though Varla might be up to his reaction to the news of Juliet's death, which is absurdly bloodless, both are effective enough when they are required to write about the ground. But you don't feel that their emotions run very deep, or that there is much sexual excitement in their wooing and sonneting.

A supporting cast includes Susan Brown, who tries bravely but unwisely

to give us a less dim Nurse than usual, and, more successfully, Julian Glover as a Scots-accented Lawrence. He not only commands authority with wryness but suggests that the Friar fancies himself as a pristine Fleming, a boffin who can perform white magic with fungi and herbs. This hubris, as much as anything, is the lovers' undoing. Glover's performance is original, fascinating and worrying. After all, there must be something wrong with a *Romeo* and *Juliet* in which the pick of the performers is an old hermit.

Earth-bound comedians

George Dandin
The Cochrane, WCI

sideways. He gets a leg on the ledge. Next thing, he is hanging from his toes. Simon Hunt's bendy Lubin is a clown with a cute appeal. However, this prologue metaphorically sums up the show. The comedy never quite gets off the ground. The bouts of physical farce are neither quotable nor organic.

They are ruffily executed and the rumpy-pumpy is out. Adultery is committed right under Dandin's nose, or

rather under Angelique's skirts, while he merely moans about her petulant manner. Bolt, transporting provincial France to Yorkshire, is free with the script, as Angelique's maid (Stephanie Woodcraft) encourages Clandine to "go fr" with Madame. Woodcraft is spirited, even coming on

strong to Clandine herself. Nevertheless, Holloway's coarseness is uneven. The class difference is insufficiently fleshed out. Malcolm Ridley as the nouveau-riche Dandin is only sporadically comical as much. The snobbery of his penultimate, pedantic father-in-law needs more bite. The mother-in-law is cut, denying us a double-act. Sally Gibbs as Angelique is amusing, and makes a bold speech defending her sexuality and con-

demning arranged marriages. She mars her rhyming couplets, though. Meanwhile, Ridley lacks the bullheadedness of a wife-beater. His leeky and final pain do not plumb the depths pointed to by composer Paul Clay's edgy period harmonies.

Visually the show is delightful. Bright silks glow against cream walls, the red-arched architectural scale elongating the gentlemen into grills-on-sticks. If only the acting were up to the mise-en-scene, score and script.

KATE BASSETT

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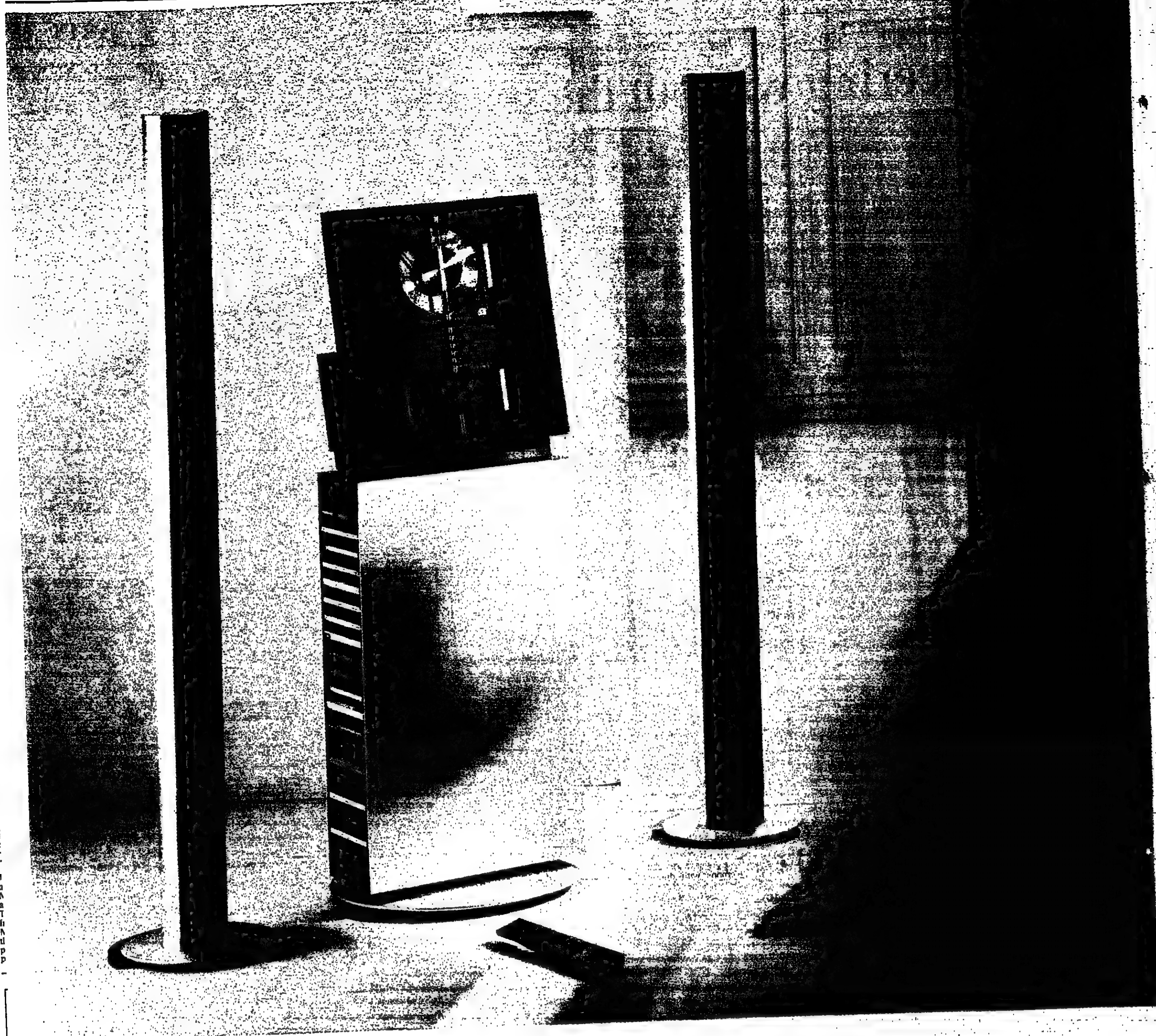
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W6 Berg & Co. of Kensington
168 Kensington High Street
0181 937 2444

W6 Rex Radio
301 Kilburn Lane 0181 969 1770

W61 Berrys
37-39 High Holborn 01405 6291

SW1 Harrods
Knightsbridge 0171 730 1234

E1 Appleton
116 Aldgate 0171 247 5000

E11 Mervyns
250 Commercial Road, New Street
0171 252 7277

W11 John Lewis
200 Tottenham Court Road
0171 629 7711

W11 Selfridges Ltd
400 Oxford Street 0171 629 1234

W11 Wallace Heaton
127 New Bond St 0171 629 7531

W1 Hi Fi Experience
227 Tottenham Court Road
0171 580 3535

W1 Sound Lovers
87 Tottenham Court Road
0171 585958

W2 Thompsons
35 Moscow Road off Queensway
Bayswater 0171 229 2077

W5 Audio Concept
27 Bond Street
0161 587 5035

W6 Berg & Co. of Kensington
168 Kensington High Street
0181 937 2444

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Wales make Hall central feature of rebuilding plan

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WHATEVER affection Welsh rugby union followers had for the old national team management, or however they regard the new, the next two months will provide them with a roller-coaster ride into the 1995 World Cup in South Africa. The shape of things to come was made public yesterday with a new captain and a new squad including ten uncapped players.

Above all, the incoming manager and coach, Geoff Evans and Alex Evans, accentuated the positive, in the quality of players at their disposal and the attacking rugby they hope to play. The two men, the

one a lecturer in London, the other a professional coach from Brisbane, believe nothing—even defeat of New Zealand in the pool matches—is impossible. Such talk might be taken with a pinch of salt were it not for the personal and professional achievements of Alex Evans. He is an achiever, as player and coach, in two hemispheres. As one who also overcame severe illness, he wastes neither his time nor that of his players and it is the philosophy of achievement he will hammer into them in the six weeks before departure for South Africa.

The training squad of 32 will be pared down to 26 by April 18 and will be led by Mike Hall, the Cardiff centre. He is one of 13 players from the Heineken League leaders—the club of which Alex Evans is coaching director—and notable casualties from the previous regime of Robert Norster and Alan Davies include Phil Davies, Wales' most-capped forward, Richie Collins, Rupert Moon and Nigel Davies.

I can confirm my commitment not only to Welsh rugby but to the formation of a strong Welsh national side. Once Alex Evans became coach, Hall was always a likely captain. In the time available, the coach had pragmatic decisions to make and Hall, 29, a partner in a chartered surveying company, has been his club captain for three years. One of his first actions was to have lunch with Iwan Evans. "We need a fit-leader helping me on the field of play and with the squad," Hall said.

The new management wanted a player closer to the action than wing and Hall's knowledge of the new coach's methods clinched the job. "Mike is very aware of the playing policy we want to achieve," Alex Evans said. "He has proved his leadership qualities with Cardiff, he has been away with the

British Lions, worked with other coaches and captains, and is a disciplined and strong person." It is a mark of the former regime's achievements that 30 players (the exceptions being Ford and Harris) have been picked from existing national squads at either senior, A or under-21 level. Six are 23 or under and a further three players will be considered if they can prove their match fitness in time. They are Nigel Walker, the Cardiff wing, Ricky Evans, the Llanelli prop, and John Davies, the Neath prop suspended after the international against England in February.

Dennis John, the Pontypridd coach, will take charge of the backs. Mike Ruddock the back row and half backs, and Alex Evans the right forwards. "I have to put my stamp on the whole team but we are confident we can achieve what we have set down on paper," Alex Evans said. "The squad has been picked specifically to match the All Blacks at the lineup. They are playing different rugby to what they played ten years ago and they are very beatable. I see no problem going out against them."

Evans should know. In 1986, as assistant coach to Australia, he helped Alan Jones prepare a team that beat New Zealand in New Zealand. Now Wales have given him the chance to do so again and he means to show his gratitude.

WALES SQUAD

BACKS: A. Clement (Swansea), J. Thomas (Cardiff), I. Evans (Llanelli), S. Ford (Cardiff), A. Harris (Swansea), W. Ford (Llanelli), M. Hall (Cardiff), M. Taylor (Pontypridd), G. Thomas (Bridgend), A. Davies (Cardiff), D. Evans (Neath), N. Jones (Pontypridd), P. Jones (Pontypridd), R. Jones (Swansea), A. Dible (Treorchy), M. Gillies (Cardiff), S. John (Llanelli), L. Morris (Cardiff), R. Humphreys (Cardiff), G. Jenkins (Swansea), R. Madely (Llanelli), D. Jones (Cardiff), G. Llewellyn (Neath), G. Prosser (Pontypridd), S. Roy (Cardiff), M. Bennett (Cardiff), S. Davies (Swansea), A. Gabe (Newbridge), S. Lewis (Cardiff), H. Taylor (Cardiff), O. Williams (Cardiff).

FOR us it is exciting, for others it is frightening. Wales side have reportedly made inquiries.

RFL to consider proposals for switch to summer

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

AFTER 100 years locked in stasis, rugby league is on the brink of a fundamental leap of faith, with the establishment of a £25 million 12-team super league by 1997 and wholesale transformation of the game in Britain as a summer sport for global television consumption.

At present a game afflicted by debt, inertia and parochialism, when the 35 professional and semi-professional club chairmen meet tomorrow in Wigan, they will consider a future apparently laden with commercial and expansionist possibilities.

The alternative is a repeat of the cherry-picking of players and the schism that has occurred in Australia, with the emergence of the Super League, which is backed by News Limited, the Australian arm of The News Corporation, the parent company of The Times.

A glimpse of the promised land was enough to convince Maurice Lindsay, the chief executive of the Rugby Football League, that there is no turning back. After years promoting the 13-man code as the "greatest game" and nobody listening, to have the world placed at its feet is like a light piercing a century of pitch black.

Lindsay had his cards firmly on the table after discussions yesterday with Sir Chris Chubb, the chief executive of BSkyB, an associate company of News Corp. "Proposals were made, and they will be put before the club chairmen," he said. "The formation of a super league gives rugby league a glorious opportunity to expand on a world stage. At the same time, the League has to safeguard the interests of all clubs."

In the century of the split from rugby union, the professional game is poised to gain huge financial muscle at a time when union is continuing its vacillations over payments. With the mounting defections to league in Australia and New Zealand, there is a danger that the union World Cup in South Africa next month will act as a shipwreck.

Officials of the Super League have held talks in the week since its dramatic emergence with several Australia union internationals, including Phil Kearns, the hooker. In Britain, where Mike Burton, the former England union international, was asked to recruit players, three members of the

and chief executive, would not only involve a switch of the European season to summer to ally itself with Australia.

The 20 clubs outside the super league would be split into two divisions, with promotion and relegation, leaving questions about the future of the Challenge Cup. Not that tradition has got league far. In reaching for the worldwide satellite television networks, however, there would be a long way for it to fall. Jack Robinson, the Wigan chairman, said: "For the likes of us it's exciting, for others it's frightening, but in being part of an organisation that is going worldwide, it's like the Berlin Wall coming down."

An announcement in Australia that the super league in Britain was already cast in stone came as a surprise to Leeds, especially as it is opposed to summer rugby. Alf Davies, the Leeds chief executive, said: "I may be cynical, but it is remarkable that a plan with little substance should be sprung the day the Rugby League council was considering summer rugby."

The first event to suffer might be the rugby league World Cup, in England and Wales in October. Ken Arthurson, the Australian Rugby League chairman, has said none of the 125 players reportedly signed up to the Super League will be considered by Australia. Any room for compromise that existed was possibly dashed by Arthurson's reference last night to the "dishonesty and treachery" of Lindsay and Graham Carden, the New Zealand Rugby League president, in supporting the super league plan.



Cowley, the chief executive of News Limited, at the Super League press conference in Sydney yesterday. Photograph: Megan Lewis

Super League coup fells Australian rivals

It is no exaggeration to say that the past week will go down in the history of Australian rugby league as the most momentous period since the sport was first played here in 1907.

Even Paul Keating, the Prime Minister, who is not one of the country's greatest rugby authorities, acknowledged that it was the biggest sports story in Australia since the introduction of World Series Cricket in 1977.

In a few dramatic days, Rupert Murdoch has pulled the rug from under the Australian Rugby League (ARL) and its principal benefactor,

Kerry Packer, with the announcement that the New Zealand and British rugby league authorities have signed exclusively to play against News Limited's Australian Super League teams. The move effectively freezes the Australian Rugby League out of international football.

The decisive moment came yesterday afternoon when Ricky Stuart, of the Canberra Raiders, the Super League's earliest signing, finally turned down a counter-offer from the ARL. Stuart, who had reportedly been offered up to £1 million by both camps, had been at the centre of a remarkable negotiating tussle in the previous 24 hours.

On Wednesday, Packer, whose Channel Nine television network owns the rights to broadcast Australian games, dispatched his son, James, to Canberra to do a deal with Stuart.

Roger Maynard on the announcement from Sydney that has shaken rugby league to the core

After that meeting, James Packer and ARL officials flew on to Queensland to try to dissuade Brisbane from taking the same road as the Canberra Raiders. For a while, it seemed the ARL might be clawing its way back. But a disastrous press conference in Sydney, in which one of Packer's celebrity commentators and a former leading league player, Paul Vautin, insulted a News Limited columnist before terminating questioning, heralded the end of the ARL comeback.

The next day, Stuart confirmed he would remain with the Super League and, a few

hours later, Murdoch's right-hand man in Australia, Ken Cowley, the chief executive of News Limited, broke the news.

Late yesterday afternoon, Cowley revealed to an astonished press conference in Sydney that he had "consummated" a deal with the British and New Zealand which would allow them to "internationalise the game". It was the Super League's trump card in the campaign against the ARL, which had warned defecting players that it would not be able to play in state and international fixtures if they signed up with News Limited.

Cowley said that the ARL might have misled players about the opportunities in international football under the new arrangement, thereby giving them the opportunity to back out of their existing ARL contracts and sign with Super League.

The developments of the past week have been given greater editorial prominence in the Australian media than almost any sporting story in memory. In a country obsessed by sport, the Packer-Murdoch battle has dominated newspapers, radio and television since Thursday of last week when News Limited launched a court action aimed at freeing six clubs to join the Super League.

By last night, Brisbane, Canberra, the Westerns Reds, of Perth, and the Auckland Warriors, from New Zealand, appeared to have joined, with others not far behind.

Cowley let slip yesterday that he had offered the free-to-air television rights for Super League to Packer at an "extremely brief and heated" meeting this week. "Our discussions in his office would have made pretty good television," he said.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

Like yesterday's refresher, this hand is about communication. Dealer South. Game All: Teams.

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT. In a recent county knock-out match, both teams bid to this precarious slam. Plan the play on a heart lead. The first declarer, not wanting to waste a heart trick, won the lead in hand and laid down the king of spades. East ducked smoothly, although it would have been wiser to win. South now knew that either West had started with three trumps, in which case the slam had no chance, or that the trumps were breaking, because no sane East would duck holding ace — jack and another.

Not wanting to risk a heart ruff, he played a second spade, and lost two tricks in the suit.

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT. Baker ahead. In the St Peters de Beauvoir tournament, Chris Baker has raced away with six wins from the first six games. Neil McDonald is in hot pursuit with five wins out of six.

White: Berry; Black: Baker. St Peters de Beauvoir tournament, London, April 1995. Larsen's Opening. 1. b3 Nc6 2. Bb2 g5 3. a3 Bg7 4. Nf3 0-0 5. Be2 0-0 6. d4 Nd7 7. c4 a5 8. Nc3 Bf6 9. Qc2 Ne5 10. Nbd4 Nd5 11. 0-0 a6 12. Rac1 Bc7 13. Rd1 h5 14. Nf3 Ne7 15. Qd2 Bg4 16. Nf4 Bxg4 17. Bg4 Ne5 18. Nf3 Nf7 19. Ng3 c6 20. Nd5 Qh4 21. Nf4 Qh5 22. Qe2 Qh6 23. Bxe5 Bxg4 24. Nd3 f4 25. Ne1 g3 26. Qc2 Qh5 27. Ng3 g4 28. Nd5 Qh6 29. Rd6 Rf8

White resigns.

By Raymond Keene. This position is from the game Cvitan - Bischoff, Groningen 1980. The black king has no moves available and White has a powerful pin on the a8 diagonal. Not surprisingly, White has an immediate win. What did he play?

Solution: page 42

Holmes awaits final showdown

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT IN LAS VEGAS

THE third return of Larry Holmes reads like the screenplay of a Hollywood western: old fighter, looking forward to retirement, is persuaded to come back for one last assignment.

So, the old man from Easton, Pennsylvania, comes into this desert town to deal with his young adversary, Oliver McCall, the World Boxing Council heavyweight champion, at Caesars Palace tomorrow. "I don't want to dwell on the past, but on the future," Holmes says. "When all this is over, I'll go back to my family and have a happy life in Easton. I'm going to die out there. I have already got a cemetery plot there. So it's no case of me moving to California to keep up with the Joneses. I'll stay in Easton — and let them keep up with the Holmeses."

The story is so corny, you would not think that anyone would buy it. But the ever-romantic boxing public keep coming back for more. Holmes has his own reasons for coming back for more. "In a way, I need boxing," he says. "Because of the ego, I've got to feel within myself. But I don't need boxing for the money. I have enough money for the rest of my life."

Since Holmes owns most of Easton, including the federal court house, you have to believe him, particularly when he says he does not particularly want to fight Mike Tyson again for any kind of money. But, like all good businessmen, he finds it difficult to



Holmes relaxes after a training session for his title bout

turn down a sensible chance to make a few dollars more. Holmes' two retirements came after he was "ripped off" with controversial decisions in the two bouts with Michael Spinks in 1985 and 1986, and after the devastating fourth-round knockout by Tyson in 1988, which exposed Holmes for the ageing boxer he was.

The bout with Tyson probably left him with damaged vision for, four years later, when he lifted Ray Mercer's World Boxing Organisation (WBO) title, the vision in his right eye was blurred. "I fought Mercer with a de-

tached retina," Holmes said. "It was real dark in my eye."

Thinking that he could take Evander Holyfield's title as well, Holmes secretly had an eye operation under the name of Charles Jones, and then, incredibly, stepped into the ring against Holyfield wearing a contact lens. Luckily for Holmes, a left hook knocked out the lens in the third round. Even though he boxed the remaining rounds with limited vision, he escaped serious eye injury. After the bout, Holmes had another operation to correct his eyesight which, he says, is now fine.

Indeed, Holmes looked in excellent shape training yesterday. The old power is no longer in the jab, but the punch is there. He is one of the greatest heavyweights ever, and insists he knows enough "to take McCall to school."

Paul Weir, of Scotland, is being lined up for a lucrative bout with Baby Jake Matlala, of South Africa, in Sun City after retaining his WBO light-flyweight title on Tuesday with a points decision over Renato Magrango, of the Philippines. His long-term goal is to take the flyweight title from Alberto Jimenez, of Mexico.

- CABOTINAGE
a. Passing stolen goods
b. Playing to the gallery
c. Discovery voyaging
- CHAROSET
a. A dog-cart
b. A library stall
c. Spiced apples
- COPACETIC
a. With an acidic sparkle
b. Making peace together
c. Fine
- DEFTERDAR
a. A Turkish accountant
b. The day before yesterday
c. An extinct amphibian
- Answers: page 42

Relaxed Woosnam reaps handsome return from scene of 1992 failure

Where glory lies around the Corner

David Miller visits the spot that can make or break Masters winners

There are not too many places where to sit for several hours in the rain, with the wind blowing from every direction, is a privilege and a pleasure. Amen Corner, which makes and breaks Masters champions, happens to be one of them.

Yesterday, the Augusta National crowd, as large as ever, was huddled motionless beneath umbrellas, like so many penguins on some Galapagos rock, to witness the trauma which the best must survive. It was here that Ian Woosnam's defence of his title disintegrated on the final day in 1992, when Fred Couples, the winner, had a scary escape, his tee-shot at the 12th coming to rest inches above Rae's Creek on the bank below the 12th green.

Woosnam now made the fabled corner a bonus in his promising opening round of 69. Coming to the 11th under par, his approach was

Woosnam's challenge... 44
Photograph... 44

12 feet beyond the hole. Looking exceedingly relaxed, never mind the weather, his birdie putt crept, hovered, and dropped for him to go three under. His pitch to the 12th was sound and safe, 20 feet above the pin which was sited left-front and close to the bunker. Woosnam staggered in mock relief, but this time the birdie putt ran a foot past.

Amen Corner gained its name from Herbert Warren Wind, esteemed chronicler for *The New Yorker*. A reviewer also of jazz records, Wind borrowed the name from an old spiritual lyric, and it stuck.

The 11th, with its rolling downhill fairway, looks deceptively innocent, never mind the pond lurking to the left of the green. "The risk of failure from bold, gambling attack is too great, so avoid the water and go for the right of the green," observed Arnold Palmer, four times a Masters winner. Once, when Jack



Gay Brewer plays his approach shot to the 13th green on the infamous Amen Corner at Augusta National yesterday. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

Burke put his five-iron three feet from the pin when he was placed close to the water. He was reprieved by Ben Hogan, his partner. "You either missed that shot, or you're a damn fool," Hogan said.

The steady rain yesterday softened the menace of this tormenting start to the inward half, making it easier to hold approaches to the greens. There was no less atmosphere than on those other humid spring days that are more familiar: no buzz of conversation from spectators, the damp scene as silent as a graveyard interrupted only by the distant hooting of locomotives from the downtown shunting yard.

Few players were in serious trouble. Scott Hoch, who had miserably lost the play-off to Nick Faldo on the 11th in 1988, calmly went through his par, narrowly failing to birdie at the 12th. There was a fine reception for the 72-year-old Doug Ford, champion of 1957 and playing his 43rd Masters. He hit a glorious pitch ten feet above the pin and was barely a foot away from a birdie putt.

Isolated on a high bank beyond the creek and surrounded by a profusion of shrubs in blossom, the 12th green is like some secluded garden in a corner of Blenheim or Cliveden, idyllically peaceful with its backcloth of

20 shades of green among the deciduous and evergreens. The degree to which a player needs to be focused is illustrated by the story of Hogan in 1947. Hogan birdied the 12th and moved towards the 13th tee, expecting first strike, oblivious to the commotion that had occurred, as they stood on the 12th tee, from where Claude Harmon, his partner, holed in one. Still oblivious to what had happened, Hogan observed to Harmon: "You know, that's the first time I've birdied the 12th."

It was at this hole, too, that Palmer was spectacularly involved on the occasion of his

first victory in 1958. His pitch plugged in the bank, there was a debate with the referee on whether he was allowed a free drop ultimately he played two balls, achieving par with the free drop and double-bogeying the plugged ball, fate at the delay. Palmer slashed at his drive from the 13th, striking the ball so far that he was on the par-five green in two — rare at that time — and single-punted for an eagle. A subsequent ruling gave him par at the 12th, and the tide.

Craig Stadler, champion of 1982, was in characteristic, casual form. Narrowly missing a birdie putt on the 11th, he lofted a perfect pitch to the 12th

a foot from the hole to go two under, a margin he retained all the way to the clubhouse.

Sandy Lyle's better days have come and gone. He was as politely surprised as anyone by his title bid in 1987, and now he came down the hill three over, shuffling along in the rain in creased blue water-proofs looking like one of the greenkeepers. The touch is still there some of the time. Missing the green by 20 feet, he struck a perfect chip to hold his par and then left his ball comfortably close on the 12th green. "A pretty shot," someone called, but not pretty enough or consistent enough to put him on the leaderboard.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Atlanta 94 Cleveland 87, Charlotte 84 Philadelphia 86, Indiana 102 Washington 90, Chicago 108 New Jersey 101, Detroit 120, Dallas 130 LA Lakers 111, New York 114 Minnesota 94.

BOXING

IRVINE: World Boxing Organisation (WBO) super-middleweight (154 lb) title fight, Wladimir Klitschko (Ukraine) vs. Roy Jones Jr (USA). Klitschko won by unanimous decision. WBA super-middleweight (154 lb) title fight, Wladimir Klitschko (Ukraine) vs. Roy Jones Jr (USA). Klitschko won by unanimous decision.

BOWLS

MELTON MOWBRAY: English Indoor Bowls Association national championship. First round: Peter Dinklage (England) vs. John Hogg (Scotland). Dinklage won 1-0. Second round: Peter Dinklage (England) vs. John Hogg (Scotland). Dinklage won 1-0.

CRICKET

ASIA CUP: Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka. Bangladesh won by 107 runs.

FOOTBALL

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS: EUROPEAN CUP: Semi-finals, first leg: Bayern Munich 0 Ajax 0, Paris Saint Germain 1 AC Milan 0. FA CUP: Premier League: Leeds 4 Norwich 1, Manchester United 2 Tottenham 1. Championship: Reading 1 Millwall 1. Football League: First division: Arsenal 1 Liverpool 1, Manchester United 2 Tottenham 1. Championship: Reading 1 Millwall 1.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Hartford 4 Toronto 2, New York Rangers 4 Philadelphia 1, Pittsburgh Penguins 4 Washington Capitals 1.

RUGBY LEAGUE

STONES BITE CHAMPIONSHIP: First division: Wigan 10 Doncaster 8, Wigan 10 Doncaster 8.

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Basketball Championship play-off: Quarter-final, first leg: Birmingham 10 Sheffield 10. Snooker: World Snooker Championship: First round: Stephen Hendry 5-1 Mark Williams.

HOKEY

BRISBANE: British Universities Home Nations Hockey Championship: First round: Bristol 10 Exeter 0.

SKATING

ISLE OF MAN: British national championship: Men's: Steve Nisbet 1, G. Turner 2, J. G. Turner 3.

SQUASH

ABERDEEN: British Squash Association (BSA) national championship: Men's: Steve Nisbet 1, G. Turner 2, J. G. Turner 3.

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TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL: Tottenham vs Chelsea (11.30), Manchester United vs Liverpool (12.30), Arsenal vs Blackburn (1.30), Newcastle vs Aston Villa (2.00), Everton vs Manchester City (2.00), West Ham vs Leeds (2.00), Sheffield Wednesday vs Nottingham Forest (2.00), Derby vs Preston (2.00), Millwall vs Reading (2.00), Luton vs Barnsley (2.00), Notts County vs Grimsby (2.00), Walsley vs Gillingham (2.00), Shrewsbury vs Exeter (2.00), Torquay vs Dagenham (2.00), Maidstone vs Dover (2.00), Dover vs Maidstone (2.00), Dover vs Maidstone (2.00).

YESTERDAY'S RACING RESULTS

Aintree: 1.100m (11.00) 1. STOMPIN (J. 12.00) 2. CILLOIN (J. 12.00) 3. CILLOIN (J. 12.00). 1.100m (11.00) 1. STOMPIN (J. 12.00) 2. CILLOIN (J. 12.00) 3. CILLOIN (J. 12.00). 1.100m (11.00) 1. STOMPIN (J. 12.00) 2. CILLOIN (J. 12.00) 3. CILLOIN (J. 12.00).

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Postscript on the Cold War

The World Tonight, Radio 4, 10.00pm.

In the late 1940s, George Kennan, the former Moscow-based American diplomat, was one of the first to urge the West to adopt a containment policy towards the Soviet Union. Kennan might say that the reason he can now afford to admit that he was wrong, is that he is now 91 and beyond the range of his critics' firestorm. If that were true, he would not have agreed to be interviewed on *The World Tonight*. In the 1950s, Kennan became a trenchant critic of America's Cold War policies which he had previously supported. He admits that the mistake he made in 1947 was not to make it sufficiently clear that he believed the nuclear build-up was not the only option when political weapons were available.

Evening Concert, Classic FM, 8.00pm.

Tonight's Hallé Orchestra concert, recorded in Manchester, was a tribute to four members of the orchestra who died of cancer. There are works by Beethoven, Ravel, Sibelius, Weber and Elgar. And, in my delight, there is Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*. Its inspiration was the Lorenz-Jessica love scene in *The Merchant of Venice* (*How sweet the music sleeps*). The version we hear tonight is neither the one for 16 voices, nor the one for four, but the version for orchestra alone. I miss the singers but, even without them, the work remains as exquisite and almost as near-provoking as the same composer's *The Lark Ascending*. Peter Daville

RADIO 1

FM Stereo, 4.00pm Bruno Brookes with 5.30 Steve Wright 5.30 Simon Mayo, featuring Vanessa Williams playing live 5.30 Andy Kershaw (live only: Europe Today) 7.00 News 7.15 World Today 7.30 Political Insult 8.00 News 8.15 On the News 8.30 Science 9.00 News (NW) 10.00 John Peel 1.00pm The FM Rap Show with Westwood

RADIO 2

FM Stereo, 6.00pm Martin Kellner 7.30 Wake Up to Women 8.15 Paves for Thought 8.30 John Peel 11.30 News 11.50 Outlook 3.30 Midlands 4.00 News 4.05 Sport 4.15 BBC English 4.30 Focus on Faith (NW) News in German 4.30 News 5.15 Music 5.30 Politics 5.30 Listen to the Band: Highlights from the Brass Explosion Gala Concert 10.30 Nick Barnard: from the dock of the 1960s General Jackson in Tennessee 12.05pm Digby Fawcett 1.00pm Charles Novak with Night Rider

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00pm Morning Reports 5.00 The Breakfast Programme 5.15 News 5.30 News 5.45 News 5.55 News 6.00 News 6.15 News 6.30 News 6.45 News 6.55 News 7.00 News 7.15 News 7.30 News 7.45 News 7.55 News 8.00 News 8.15 News 8.30 News 8.45 News 8.55 News 9.00 News 9.15 News 9.30 News 9.45 News 9.55 News 10.00 News 10.15 News 10.30 News 10.45 News 10.55 News 11.00 News 11.15 News 11.30 News 11.45 News 11.55 News 12.00 News 12.15 News 12.30 News 12.45 News 12.55 News 1.00 News 1.15 News 1.30 News 1.45 News 1.55 News 2.00 News 2.15 News 2.30 News 2.45 News 2.55 News 3.00 News 3.15 News 3.30 News 3.45 News 3.55 News 4.00 News 4.15 News 4.30 News 4.45 News 4.55 News 5.00 News 5.15 News 5.30 News 5.45 News 5.55 News 6.00 News 6.15 News 6.30 News 6.45 News 6.55 News 7.00 News 7.15 News 7.30 News 7.45 News 7.55 News 8.00 News 8.15 News 8.30 News 8.45 News 8.55 News 9.00 News 9.15 News 9.30 News 9.45 News 9.55 News 10.00 News 10.15 News 10.30 News 10.45 News 10.55 News 11.00 News 11.15 News 11.30 News 11.45 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on the Isle of Wight is cheaper than you might think." In a pastiche of *Gladiators*, the boys stood on upturned wire in-trays in crickie pads and duelled with cotton buds. It's not often you see that on television.

Finally, *Absolutely Fabulous* (BBC 1) concerned the arrival of New Year's Eve at Patsy's station. Played by Kate Winslet as Jackie, the show, like last week's, was at its instant classic. There is a theory that good sitcom writers should quit while ahead, but these characters are irrepressible. Bubble (Jane Horrocks) has never been more bankers, nor Patsy (Joanna Lumley) more ghoulish. Edina entered on roller blades, hilariously. "Fabulous, aren't they? Patsy gave them to me for Christmas." Saffy was outraged. "I gave them to you for Christmas." Everyone turned to Patsy. She shrugged. "didn't say they were from me. I just gave them to you."

Lynne
Truss

right-wing monologists who echo the views of the silent majority, and never make the mistake of overestimating the listener. Students worship them; their books sell in millions; conservative money has set up "Empower America", an agency which feeds them with material. "Empower America!" is what they say in this office when they answer the phone. As yet, they have not also in-

The pejorative term for these fans is "dimo heads", and yes, many ditto heads were heard phoning in to say, yes I agree with you, ditto to that, you are fantastic and we love you. Radio has never been more influential. These guys are credited with the Republican

BBC 1, starring junior heartthrobs Ant McPartlin and Declan Donnelly, formerly unknown to me, but apparently already involved in the popular music industry (so I believe, m'lud). But if they are famous, they clearly deserve to be. The show, staged in front of an enthusiastic studio audience, was casual, funny and surreal (the Vic Reeves influence was evident), and I particularly enjoyed Donnelly's repeated non sequitur: "A holiday


quit while ahead, but these characters are irrepressible. Bubble (Jane Horrocks) has never been more bonkers, nor Patsy (Joanna Lumley) more ghoulish. Edina entered on roller blades, hilariously. "Fabulous, aren't they? Patsy gave them to me for Christmas," Saffy was outraged, "I gave them to you for Christmas." Everyone turned to Pats. She shrugged, "I didn't say they were from me, I just gave them to you."

CHANNEL 4

6.35 **Split and Hercules** (7758007)
7.00 **The Big Breakfast** (73736)
9.00 **Specsards** (r) (26639) 9.30 **California Dream**
Adventures of a high school rock band (61828)
9.55 **Gamemaster** (r) (619700) 10.25 **Bernie**
(26232) 10.55 **The Adventures of Thirtysix**
(5375991) 11.20 **Pugwatt's Summer** (r) (508602)
11.50 **Terrytoons** (8726638)
12.00 **The Lorax** A tale about the disastrous effect
man's greed on the environment. (80213)
12.30 **Sesame Street** (r) (82736) 1.30 **The Mag**
Roundabout followed by **The Womble**
Paddington and **The Clangers** (r) (8572130)
1.55 **Ginger Nutts** It's A Lovely Day (920264)
2.10 **F.L.M.: Valley of Song** (1953, b/w) starring **Cliff**
Evens A comedy about a choirmeister who splits
with his when he takes over the controls part in *Handel's*
Messiah to one young woman instead of another.
Directed by Gilbert Gunn (3107858)
3.30 **Profiles of Nature** A visit to a herony near **La**
Erie (r) (5108942)
3.55 **Waterways** Dick Warner arrives at his destination
Limerick (r) (Teletext) (190939)
4.30 **Fifteen-To-One** (Teletext) (s) (755)
5.00 **Deadline** (r) (Teletext) (s) (8755)
5.30 **Undercover Britain: Toot Toots** (r) (187)
6.00 **Blossom** Los Angeles-based teen comed
(Teletext) (s) (820)
6.30 **Happy Days** American comedy series. (Telet
(856552) 6.55 **Teletexts** Cartoon (544945)
7.00 **Channel 4 News** (Teletext) and weather (892948)
7.50 **You Don't Know Me But ...** (r) (770113)
8.00 **Gardens Without Borders: Italy** Alan Mason sa
Ken Aker search for alpine plants in the mountai
above Lake Maggiore. (Teletext) (s) (4939)
8.30 **Brookside** (Teletext) (s) (9674)
9.00 **Ellen** American sit-com. (Teletext) (s) (7484)



Baddiel, Loughran and Skinner (11.15pm)



Andy Griffith and Patricia Neal (12.25am)

12.25am FILM: A Face in the Crowd (1957, b/w) stars Andy Griffith, Patricia Neal, Walter Matthau and L. L. Riemick. A satirical drama about the influence of television. Directed by Elia Kazan (60506311)

2.40 FILM: Maria Martin, or The Murder in The Rue Saint-Sauveur (1935, b/w) starring Tod Slaughter, Sophie Stewart, and Eric Portman. A bloodthirsty melodrama about an evil Victorian square who murders his servant mistress and buries her in a remote barn. Directed by George King (213413)

Ends at 3.50

[illegible]

BOXING 39

FISTFUL OF DOLLARS
KEEPS HOLMES COMING
BACK FOR MORE

SPORT

FRIDAY APRIL 7 1995

RACING 41

YOUNG HUSTLER
MOVES UP IN
NATIONAL BETTING

Welshman equals his best Masters start with 69 as Beck sets pace

Woosnam leads European challenge

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN AUGUSTA

EGGED ON by a band of supporters that included Glendryth, his wife, Ian Botham and Max Boyce, Ian Woosnam made light of the wet, overcast conditions and overpowered the long holes at Augusta National golf club here yesterday. Woosnam came off the par-72 course after a first round of 69 in the Masters with a jaunty step and the light of battle in his eyes. Was he reliving 1991, when he won?

Having had the wind put up them by the hardness of the course in practice and greens that were as firm and fast as on the Sunday of last year, the players arrived yesterday morning to find that overnight rain had dampened the course. What had promised to be a tiger with bared teeth turned out to be nothing more than a tabby.

Woosnam's 69 equalled his best start in eight appearances and his second lowest score in 27 rounds here. It equalled the scores of Hale Irwin, Scott Hoch and David Edwards, three Americans, none of whom will see 35 again. And as the day wore on and rain continued to fall intermittently, Woosnam predicted that the scores would fall still lower. Sure enough, an hour later Chip Beck took the lead with a 68.

Jack Nicklaus seemed intent on single-handedly proving Woosnam right when he went four, three, two, on the 3rd, 4th and 5th holes. That two, an eagle, was believed to be the first recorded at this hole.

Just as it is accepted wisdom that the way to play the Old Course at St Andrews is to aim down the left from most tees, so it is agreed that the key to low scoring in the Masters lies in mastering the par fives. All four represent birdie opportunities for men able to hit the ball a long way and, these days, at this level most men can.

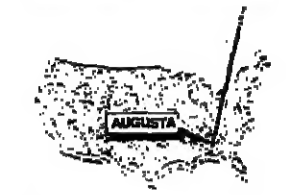
Woosnam is a pocket Hercules whose *piece de résistance* here was to clear the second bunker on the 18th, a little matter of a carry of 280 yards, in his last round in 1991. When he is drawing the ball as well as he is at present, so that the ball will follow the shape

of the fairways, these holes are meat and drink to him.

They were yesterday. He wallowed a 350-yard drive on the 555-yard 2nd and needed only a five-iron to reach the green. On the uphill 8th he pitched to ten feet from 80 yards. A four-iron to the left of the green followed by two putts was all he needed on the 13th. Only the 15th caught out Woosnam.

Like Beck two years ago, he found himself caught betwixt and between after his drive. He had 230 yards to the front of the green. The distance suggested a three-wood but Woosnam was scared of his ball bounding through the green and scurrying into the

EARLY LEADERS



US unless stated
FIRST ROUND: 68 C. Beck, 69: D. Edwards, W. Grady (Aus), S. Hoch, H. Irwin, I. Woosnam (GB), T. M. Cahill (Ire), M. O'Connell (Ire), C. Schuler (F), J. Hays, M. A. Owen (S), J. C. M. Baker, F. Zostera, 75: C. Dennis, M. Hearn, J. Shuman, 76: C. Coody, D. Waldorf, J. Morse, L. Wachuska, 78: J. Day, S. Lowery, A. Lyle (GB), T. B. Foster, R. Fair, G. Pappas (GB), M. Brooks, 79: J. Maggert, 79: G. Brewer, B. Casper, 80: J. Jackson, 81: F. Nelsa (NZ), 84: * G. Yamamoto, 85: D. Ford.

* denotes amateur

water behind it. So he under-clubbed, using a two-iron that he admitted later was probably a little ambitious. "I took a chance and paid the price," he said. It plopped into the water six feet short of dry land and that was his first bogey of the day.

One of the many pleasurable aspects of Augusta National is that, with only a few exceptions, it is easy to follow one player for a few holes and then flit through a glade of trees to pick up another. So it was that one was able to witness the "Augusta Gavotte" with Sandy Lyle before moving speedily to catch up with Woosnam.

The "Augusta Gavotte" is named thus because it in-

volves a dance around the edge of the first three holes — up the right of the 1st, down the side of the 2nd, a quick side-step from the 2nd fairway through some cherry blossom and pink dogwoods to the 3rd green and then another step to the back of the 4th tee.

Lyle was playing with John Daly in a pairing that contained two of the biggest and wildest hitters in golf. His drive on the 1st crashed into a lady's shoulder and ricocheted into an upturned umbrella. His second missed the green and his third crawled like a man on all fours to the edge of the putting surface.

A five on the first hole of the first round of the Masters is not serious, even though that put him five strokes behind Hale Irwin, the leader at that moment. There are 71 holes to go, after all, plenty of time to recover.

But then Lyle hoicked his drive on the long 2nd into the trees to the left of the hole that swoops gloriously downhill. For a while while Lyle, his wife, and Quentin, their three-month-old son, watched anxiously. Lyle crashed about in the foliage. He bunkered his third in one of the gaping sand traps and another bogey followed.

When he hit his tee-shot into a bunker on the short 4th, from which he had to play out with one foot in the sand and one foot out, it was time to move on to Woosnam. Lyle's golf was as dull as the skies.

Woosnam's however, was close to regal, not far, he later admitted, from the way he was playing in 1991. "Anything under par is a good score round here," he said. "But the rain this morning made me think that a really low score was on."

He took nearly a four-month break during the winter, spent time with his family, played some golf at Aberdovey and went cruising in the Mediterranean in a friend's yacht.

"I took the break just to get away from golf for a while. I've been travelling around the world for a few years and felt it was time to have a rest." He had taken a similar length of time off in 1986 and 1990 and the following seasons were two of his best.



Woosnam laments a missed putt at the 4th during his first round of 69 in the Masters at Augusta yesterday.

David Miller, page 42

Caution urged over plan for super league

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

A MEETING as crucial to rugby league as the one a century ago that brought the game into existence, faces club chairmen at Wigan tomorrow, when they discuss revolutionary proposals for an elite league in a season running from March to October.

Rejection of the £25 million plan for a summer super league of 12 teams from 1997 would almost certainly mean a split in the game similar to the one in Australia, where more than 125 leading players have committed themselves to the breakaway Star League operated by News Limited, part of The News Corporation, which is parent company of The Times.

Opinion is divided, and any vote at Central Park could be close. Alf Davies, the Leeds chief executive, said: "We urge the utmost caution. If we make the wrong decision, the game could be finished in a short space of time."

St Helens and Warrington are two of several clubs fundamentally opposed to the notion

Australian coup — 39
Summer switch — 39

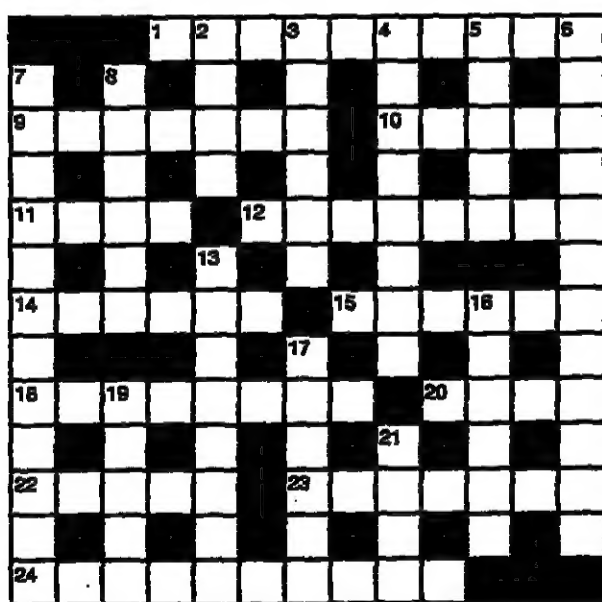
of summer rugby. Wigan are firmly in the pro-summer lobby. Jack Robinson, the Wigan chairman, said: "We've been cruising for 100 years. With this plan, maybe we can start motorising."

A global super league involving England, Australia and New Zealand is intended eventually to embrace Europe, South Africa and North America, with satellite television coverage on BSkyB in Britain, Star-TV in Asia, Fox in the United States and Fox in Australia.

Maurice Lindsay, chief executive of the Rugby Football League, has strongly backed the initiative. His support was called "treacherous" last night by Ken Arthurson, chairman of the Australian Rugby League, which is fighting an apparently losing battle to bring rebel players back to its fold.

As most of the Australian side have defected, the favourites face an obvious struggle in defending the World Cup this autumn in England and Wales.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 440

ACROSS

- 1 Groggy, facing knockout (2,3,5)
- 9 Collapse of order (7)
- 10 Carry (someone) in triumph (5)
- 11 Tip slightly (4)
- 12 Vitamin B1 deficiency disease (6)
- 14 Ship-steering apparatus (6)
- 15 Scant, thin (6)
- 18 Left-handed fighter (8)
- 20 Muddling; equitable (4)
- 22 Bustling with activity (5)
- 23 Stir from sleep (7)
- 24 Murky secrets (5,5)

DOWN

- 2 Notch; police station (4)
- 3 Tomboy (6)
- 4 Radio apparatus; a fence (8)
- 5 Tree; Euclid-type geometry (5)
- 6 Normal military uniform (7,5)
- 7 Speck in Pacific, has giant carvings (6,6)
- 8 Legendary (6)
- 13 Sluggishness (8)
- 16 Pointed beard (6)
- 17 Seasoned cold sausage (6)
- 19 Pronounce; complete (5)
- 21 Green stone; exhausted horse (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 439

ACROSS: 1 Arbitrator 8 Indulge 9 Enoch 10 Lely 11 Age limit 13 Rondo 14 Sheep 16 Squatter 17 As is 20 Magma 21 Imagery 22 The Holy See
DOWN: 1 Ariel 2 Body language 3 Tell 4 Aweigh 5 One flesh 6 Formlessness 7 Shut up 12 Footpath 13 Resume 15 Relish 18 Style 19 Wail

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Luton hoping to move indoors

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

LUTON Town, the Endsleigh Insurance League first division club, yesterday revealed plans to move to a £30 million, 20,000-seat indoor stadium. The council-owned lease on their cramped Kenilworth Road ground runs out in May next year.

The new ground would be a scaled-down version of Chicago's Pontiac Silverdome, one of the venues for the 1994 World Cup. It would be built on a 50-acre site near the M1 turn-off for Luton airport and the scheme would include a hotel, community facilities and shops, parking for nearly 4,000 cars and a transportable football pitch.

Luton were pioneers of artificial surfaces but were forced to dig up their controversial plastic pitch when they were banned for competitive matches.

It is proposed that the grass pitch at the proposed new stadium would be built in nine movable 40-ton sections, allowing the hall to be used for pop concerts and exhibitions. David Kohler, the club's chairman, has already applied for planning permission but has yet to purchase the land on which it is planned to build.

"It is a dream and a very ambitious venture," he said. "But we are committed to moving from Kenilworth Road and we might as well move into the 21st century as well. We must seek to fund the project from things such as the National Lottery and grants but we are hoping to convince the council that it is a viable proposition for them. "Its creation will provide the area with a first-class

community, leisure and cultural facility which can be used throughout the year in all weather conditions."

Luton sold their present ground to the local council for £3.5 million six years ago and now pay a peppercorn rent for a venue which can accommodate just over 10,000 spectators.

"There are, of course, many obstacles ahead but it is up to the local authority if they want a multi-purpose facility like this," Kohler said. "All the architectural work and study has been carried out and there is no practical reason why it cannot work. Hopefully, if the council agree it is a practical and profitable scheme, they will renew our lease at Kenilworth Road until the new stadium is built."

Luton, who have the backing of Whitebread, the brewers, for the project, have already obtained "agreement in principle" from the Football Association, the Premier League and the Football League for the country's first indoor stadium.

"If it can be seen to be a live project I cannot envisage the football authorities having any objection," David Pleat, the team manager, said.

Milan on course to retain cup

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

AC MILAN are strong favourites to retain the European Cup after a last-minute goal by Zvonimir Boban gave them a 1-0 win at Paris Saint-Germain in the first leg of the semi-final on Wednesday night. The Croatian midfielder player neatly tucked the ball into the net from close range after Dejan Savicevic made a superb run into the penalty area.

Milan, seeking to emulate Real Madrid's record of six European Cup triumphs, became the first side to beat the French champions in this season's competition. Paris Saint-Germain had won nine and drawn one of their ten previous European Cup matches, but they made little headway against the powerful Milan side.

In the other semi-final, Ajax Amsterdam moved a step closer to their first European Cup final for 22 years with a goalless draw in the first leg at Bayern Munich. The Dutch champions outclassed the inexperienced Bayern side and now look in a perfect position to reach the final for the first time since they won the trophy for the third consecutive season in 1973.

Marc Overmars, the Holland international, was a constant danger down the left flank, where Samuel Kuffour, the Bayern defender, struggled to match his pace, but the match rarely excited the capacity 60,000 crowd.

Stig Inge Bjornebye, the Liverpool defender, was ruled out for the rest of the season yesterday after the club confirmed that the Norway international had broken a leg in the 3-1 victory over Southampton in an FA Cup Premier-ship match on Wednesday.

Bjornebye, who helped the club to win a record fifth League Cup trophy on Sunday, broke his left fibula when his studs became stuck in the grass as he stretched to reach a cross from Jamie Redknapp.

Tony Yeboah, the Leeds United forward, who scored a hat-trick in the 4-0 win over Ipswich Town, has decided to miss Ghana's African Nations' Cup qualifying match with Sierra Leone on Sunday and play against Liverpool instead.

The decision underlines Yeboah's commitment to the Eland Road cause even though he is not prepared to pledge his future to Leeds. The club and player have an option next January over whether he will stay at Leeds for a further two years.

Eintracht Frankfurt, from whom Leeds signed the 28-year-old striker, are understood to be keen to take him back. Yeboah said: "I have a contract up to January and I want to concentrate on playing for Leeds. I'm very happy here, but we'll have to wait and see."

Leighton's return, page 40

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